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W87b

BOWQUET.

THE HISTORY
OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST.

BOUQUET.

A Commedietta.

IN ONE ACT

ADAPTED FROM THE FRENCH,

Y

J. A. WOODWARD.

BOUQUET.

CHARACTERS.

PAUL GAILLARD

BICOQUET.

JENNIE GAILLARD.

PAULINE

SCENE LAID IN PARIS.

TIME. — The present.

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BOUQUET.

SCENE. *Elegant Salon in GAILLARD'S house. — Doors c. and at R. 1 E. — Door at L. 3 E. — Window R. — Fireplace and mantel L. at back. — Piano L. 1 E. — Oval centre-table centre of stage. — Two chairs. — Work-table R., and sofa near. — Bookcase L. 2 E.*

JENNIE discovered seated at piano. — GAILLARD preparing to go out.

Gaillard (to himself, seeking what he needs). My coat, my hat, my umbrella — my handkerchief.

Jennie (sighing). Go, then, if you must.

Gail. Now you must know that if it were not absolutely necessary —

Jennie. I'm not sure of it at all — but that makes no difference. I am sure that you've not passed a single evening at home for a week.

Gail. Not one?

Jennie. Not one! And you never take me anywhere; and I'm dying to see the new play at the theatre.

Gail. We'll go next week.

Jennie (wearily). Ah!

Gail. Now do be sensible, and try to understand me. The money market — the financial situation — I am obliged to be continually on the alert, or else —

Jennie. I can't see why the money market should take you to the opera every evening.

Gail. Yes! I go to hear the rumors and news, in order to profit by it to gain money enough to lavish on my little wife.

Jennie. What I'm going to ask you for won't require much money. On your way down town please buy me a bouquet — a pretty bouquet. Will you remember it?

Gail. Indeed I will. Bye, bye, Jennie dear.

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Jennie. Shall you return late?

Gail. No; about half past ten or eleven — as usual. Bye, bye, dear! (*Crosses towards door, c.*)

Jennie. Bye, bye. Don't forget my bouquet.

Gail. (exit door, c.). Yes — a bouquet! a pretty, large bouquet.

Jennie (rising and crossing R.). What a trouble it must be for him to have a little wife — like myself — and to leave her here for a week — all alone. I know that it's to earn money, so that I can have all I wish, as he says — and really I have a great deal — but I should like more. (*Sits near table and takes needle-work.*) I must think of some way to pass the evening. It's a long time till eleven o'clock. O, Penelope! Penelope! (*Leaves her work and takes newspaper.*) What could Penelope have read when she was tired of work. (*Glances at paper.*) Where was I? (*Reading.*) "Mons. Legrand was desperate! The policeman tore his hair." (*Violent ringing.*) Who's that? I don't expect any one. It's Paul! doubtless he has forgotten something.

Enter PAULINE, c.

Pauline. Madame!

Jennie. Well?

Pauline. It's a young man, madame.

Jennie. A young man?

Bicoquet (passes his head into door, c., and trying to attract PAULINE's attention). Here! I say! young woman! here!

Pauline. Sir?

Bic. (stage whisper). Don't say a young man — say a man still young — that is more exact.

Jennie. But, sir —

Bic. A thousand pardons, madame. I only showed myself to correct a mistake. I know very well that until madame has said "Admit the gentleman," I ought to remain here in the passage. I return, madame — I return. (*Disappears.*)

Jennie (rising). What is the gentleman's name? Did he give his name?

Pauline. His name?

Bic. (reappearing — to PAULINE, as before). Here, you, the card.

Jennie. Again?

Bic. A thousand pardons, madame! She forgets that I have given her my card. I have shown myself to recall it to her. I return, madame — I return. (*Disappears.*)

Pauline. Yes, madame, here is his card. (*Gives card.*)

Jennie (reading card). "Jules Bicoquet." I don't know him at all.

Bic. (reappearing, impatiently). Tell her what I told you. (*Disappears.*)

Pauline (to B.). I was going to tell her in a moment. (*To JENNIE.*) This gentleman said that he called about a very urgent matter which particularly interested madame.

Bic. (*opening door, without showing himself*). And which will not admit of a moment's delay. (*Shuts door.*)

Jennie. What can this mean? I must attend to it. Show the gentleman in.

PAULINE opens door, and signals to B. to enter.

Bic. (*majestic entrance*). At last! (*Advancing and bowing.*) Madame!

Jennie. Sir! (*To PAULINE, who crosses towards door, R.*) Remain, Pauline.

Bic. Ah, madame, five minutes only — I beg of you — just five minutes.

Jennie. But, sir —

Bic. You will not repent it.

Jennie (*aside*). What should I fear, after all? He appears strange, but not dangerous. (*To PAULINE.*) You may go, Pauline.

[*Exit PAULINE, C.*]

Bic. Whatever I may appear, madame, I have at least one of the qualities which distinguish superior men — I have only one, perhaps —

Jennie. And that is —

Bic. I am stupid with the ladies.

Jennie. Sir!

Bic. Ah! you will not believe me: *thanks* — but I will soon convince you of it. My name is easy to pronounce — James Bicoquet. My age — thirty-four years. As to my fortune — it is sufficient. Fifteen years ago, it would have passed as quite handsome, but to-day — in modern Paris —

Jennie. I beg your pardon, sir, but —

Bic. Madame!

Jennie. You said this interview concerned a matter which interested me particularly.

Bic. Yes, madame!

Jennie. And I would like to know.

Bic. What! Immediately?

Jennie. Yes! Immediately!

Bic. I will not conceal that I intended to keep it until the last — but since you seem to desire it — your husband deceives you, madame!

Jennie. Sir!

Bic. You are the most interesting and most unhappy of lovely wives — your husband deceives you!

Jennie. Sir! Sir!

Bic. At this moment, even, he is above. (*Points to ceiling.*)

Jennie (*looking at ceiling*). Above?

Bic. Yes, above, with the little actress on the second flight. He is just sitting down to a game of Bezique — and he is losing. I can't see the cards — but for all that, I'll wager that he loses.

Jennie (*fiercely*). Proofs, sir — proofs!

Bic. Do you ask for proofs?

Jennie. Yes!

Bic. Very well. (*Shows the hat which he holds in his hands.*) Look at this, madame! Have the kindness to look. (*Puts hat on his head, which disappears completely.*)

Jennie. Well?

Bic. Well—don't you see? (*Takes off hat and holds it in his hand.*)

Jennie. What does that prove?

Bic. That—that proves it is not my hat. It proves it belongs to Mons. Paul Gaillard. (*Shows inside of hat.*) P. G., madame—P. G.!

Jennie. Too true!

Bic. Ten minutes ago, madame, I was above there. What a recollection—and I was forced to leave to make room for your husband. Instead of taking my own hat, I took his, and I have brought it to you. Are you convinced now? Is the proof sufficient? (*Puts hat on table.*)

Jennie (*falls, overwhelmed, on sofa near work-table*). O heavens! can this be true?

Bic. (*melancholy, and taking chair R. of table*). Every evening, at nine o'clock, I come and sit near her. (*Sits.*)

Jennie. But, sir!

Bic. (*firmly, and rising*). Ah! Now that I have proved that I really have something interesting to say to you, I hope that you will have the goodness not to interrupt me, and that you will allow me to relate my little story. (*Reseating himself, sadly.*) Every evening, at nine o'clock, I come and sit near her. "Good evening, To-to," I say to her. "Toto" diminutive for Antonia. "Good evening, Co-co," she replies. "Coco" diminutive for Bicoquet. "How de do, Toto." "O, not badly, Coco; bring out the cards." And then I bring out the cards, and the play commences. Forty for the trump—one hundred for the ace—two hundred and fifty—five hundred. O! so complete, so intense a happiness, could not last. A week ago I came—I rang—and the servant stopped me, and said: "You must not enter, sir—madame is with her godmother from Normandy." I went away without a word. The next day I returned. The godmother was again there. The next day the godmother was there still, and I became suspicious. I played the spy, and I discovered that this godmother, who had taken my place, and interrupted my happiness, was —

Jennie (*angrily*). My husband! My husband with that woman?

Bic. (*approaching his chair*). If we leave him there —

Jennie (*rising, and crosses quickly*). What did you say?

Bic. (*rising*). I can see but two solutions to the matter. If your husband keeps my place, that he has taken—why, then, I must take his. (*Sadly.*) Every evening, at nine o'clock, I will come.

Jennie (*indignantly*). Sir! what do you mean?

Bic. I know it's rather strange; but if you were a true Parisian, say of 1852—you see—I do not complain. In the first place, I

have one flight up stairs less to climb, and also you are far more pretty than — (*suddenly*) have you any cards?

Jennie (very indignant). Sir, leave the room instantly!

Bic. No? that does not suit you. Well, then, the second solution is — we must call your husband down.

Jennie. Ah! I much prefer that.

Bic. When he comes down, I will go up. It's very simple, and everything will be proper. Gaillard here — Bicoquet there. (*Points above.*) Yes, we must call your husband down.

Jennie. I ask nothing more — but how?

Bic. As you wish.

Jennie. Give me an idea.

Bic. (violently). And why should I furnish you with ideas. It seems to me that you are interested as much as I.

Jennie (equally violent). And how can I, in the state of excitement in which I am?

Bic. (still more violent). Well, madame, and I. Do you suppose that I am not excited myself? So much so that I could scream — if I did not think it too familiar for a first visit. (*Sound of piano and singing heard overhead.*) There! hear that? (*The voice stops and air continues — Bic. sings.*) La — la — la!

Jennie. What has happened to you?

Bic. That air — I remember it. She always sings so when she wins. Ah! (*Sings.*) La — la — la! I assure you, madame, that if that air continues, I shall certainly scream. (*Goes behind table and screams.*)

Jennie (crosses quickly to fireplace). I beg of you to remain quiet, sir. (*Rings.*)

Bic. Do you turn me away, madame?

Jennie. No; an idea has just struck me.

Bic. To call him down?

Jennie. Yes.

Enter PAULINE, C.

Pauline (at door, c.). Madame?

Jennie. Go up stairs, one flight, to Mademoiselle — (*to Bic.*) What name did you say, sir?

Bic. (with an effort). Antonia Brunet.

Jennie. To Mademoiselle Antonia Brunet. You must say that I am suffering — that Madame Gaillard is suffering. Be sure and pronounce the name *distinctly* — and that the music makes me worse.

Pauline. Is madame ill?

Jennie. Yes — no — what matters it to you? Go — the name — don't forget — Madame Gaillard — say the name loud and distinctly — scream so that all can hear you. [*Exit PAULINE, C.*]

Bic. I understand you. You count upon his heart.

Jennie. And I am not wrong, for he *is* good; and when he *knows* — when he believes that I am ill —

Bic. He will come down. It's possible, after all. (*Music stops.*) There, the music stops. The errand is done.

Jennie. Quick, then! Go, sir — go!

Bic. O! we have five minutes still.

Jennie. He has only one flight to descend.

Bic. Ah, you don't understand your husband, madame — you don't know him. He is an adept at deception.

Jennie. How?

Bic. Do you imagine that he will come directly here, at the risk of being caught? No, indeed! This house has two doors — one to the Rue de la Porte, and the other to the Rue Lafayette. Don't you see? Mons. Gaillard will descend the back stairs, pass around the house — enter the front door — leisurely ascend the front stairs. It will take at least five minutes. Allowing that his anxiety for your health should quicken his steps to-day, he ought to be now — (*looks out of window.*) What did I tell you, madame? Here he is!

Jennie. Take care, he may see you!

Bic. No fear, madame! (*Draws back from window, still looking.*) He has my hat in one hand, and a bouquet in the other.

Jennie. A large bouquet of roses?

Bic. Yes.

Jennie. I asked him to buy me one.

Bic. (*laughing and coming down front*). You asked him to — ha! ha! He is an adept. Why, I recognized that bouquet.

Jennie. You recognized it?

Bic. Perfectly. The very moment that I came out from above, there, a great brute of a servant brought it in the name of young — what d'ye call him — no matter who. Your husband bought it of mademoiselle's maid, who appropriates all the bouquets.

Jennie (*indignantly*). O!

Bic. But here he comes, madame — I must go. Adieu, madame. (*Crosses to table.*)

Jennie. Adieu, sir. Do be quick.

Bic. I leave you your husband's hat, madame. He will bring you mine, which you will have the kindness to send to me — will you not?

Jennie. But where, sir?

Bic. Where? Why, above, certainly. Where do you think I am going?

Jennie. Very well, sir. It shall be sent to you.

Bic. And, I beg of you, give orders that it shall be delivered to the servant who opens the door. It will not be necessary to call me personally. (*False exit, c.*)

Jennie (*stopping him*). This way, sir. Pauline will show you out.

Bic. Adieu, madame — perhaps we may never meet again.

Jennie (*aside*). I certainly hope not.

Bic. Adieu — be happy — as for me — I will try -- adieu, madame. [*Exit door, R.*]

Jennie. First, I must conceal the hat. (*Opens door, R., and puts*

hat in her room.) And now for my revenge. At first I must be sweet, and patient, and hypocritical. That will throw him off guard, and then — (*while speaking, she has seated herself as before the entrance of BIC.*)

Enter GAILLARD, C., with bouquet and hat in hand.

Gail. Suffering? What can be the matter? (*Puts hat on table, and also bouquet.*)

Jennie (sighs). Ah!

Gail. Jennie, dear Jennie!

Jennie (sweetly). Is it you, my dear? I thought that you would not return till half past ten or eleven, as usual.

Gail. Yes; but when I am away from you, you know —

Jennie. You are always kind. But the stocks, and the money market — you must not neglect them.

Gail. O! I was going to tell you — I have been in luck — I had the good fortune to meet Mons. Magimel.

Jennie (sadly). Is he well?

Gail. Quite well; and he gave me all the information that I desired. So I had an opportunity to return quickly.

Jennie (sarcastically). Quickly!

Gail. Yes, as quickly as I could; and that is why —

Jennie. You took time to purchase a bouquet, however.

Gail. You knew I would, since you requested it.

Jennie. Give it to me.

Gail. (presenting bouquet). Isn't it pretty?

Jennie (takes bouquet and crosses). It's superb — it must have cost you dear.

Gail. (thoughtlessly). Yes, it cost me two hundred francs.

Jennie. Two hundred francs?

Gail. (recovering himself). Twenty francs — I meant twenty francs.

Jennie (examining bouquet, and putting it on piano). Did you buy it at the opera?

Gail. (embarrassed). No, I bought it in the Rue Lafitte. Magimel and I, while chatting, strolled to the Rue Lafitte, so while I was there — (*Aside.*) It's lucky I noticed the florist's address.

Jennie (aside). "Coco" was right. He is an adept.

Gail. And now that I've returned so soon, I must tell you frankly —

Jennie. Frankly?

Gail. Why, yes. I had a presentiment — just now — that is, when I left you this evening — it seemed to me — I thought I saw — that you did not look as well as usual.

Jennie. What, am I ugly?

Gail. How can you say such a thing — you were very handsome — you always are — but you seemed a little — you are not ill, are you? Have you been ill since I went away?

Jennie. Yes.

Gail. Ah! my heart told me so. What is the matter, Jennie?

Jennie. I cannot tell you — a little nervous.

Gail. Yes — I'm so sorry.

Jennie. I was nervous a quarter of an hour ago, and I did something that I am afraid you will scold me for, if I tell you.

Gail. No, no! I will not scold.

Jennie (cutting her words). The person who lives overhead — do you know who that person is?

Gail. (slyly). Who lives overhead?

Jennie. Yes.

Gail. (same). A marine insurance agent, I believe.

Jennie (observing him). No, I mean a lady.

Gail. (same). An old lady?

Jennie. No, a young lady — she sat down to the piano just now and began to sing — I don't know what she was singing — but I was so nervous, so excited, that I could not contain myself. I sent Pauline to request this lady to discontinue her song. Was I wrong?

Gail. No, you were perfectly right.

Jennie. Thanks, you are very good. (*Takes bouquet, and crosses to table.*)

Gail. Where are you going?

Jennie. To carry this bouquet into my room. (*Stops at table, and takes up B.'s hat.*) Why, what kind of a hat have you got? (*Examining it.*) That isn't yours.

Gail. What — isn't it? (*Tries on hat, which is too small.*) No, it is not mine.

Jennie. Let me see it. (*Takes it.*) No, nor it isn't Magimel's.

Gail. Indeed.

Jennie (shows him inside of hat). J. B., my dear — J. B. That doesn't stand for Magimel.

Gail. (after having looked into hat — confused). No, it's not Magimel's. I didn't say that it was, did I.

Jennie. No, you did not say so; but if it does not belong to him, whose is it?

Gail. (thinking a moment — both come forward same order). Ah! I know. The explanation is very simple. It could not be simpler, and at the same time it is quite comical. (*Forced laugh.*)

Jennie. But tell me, and let me enjoy it.

Gail. Yes, but it's so comical. You see, I was in a hurry to return here — anxious on your account, my dear — and I ran. Well, as I was running, I encountered a gentleman who was also running in an opposite direction. You are listening to me?

Jennie. Yes.

Gail. Now just let me show you — to make it more clear. (*Bus. of running against man — crosses, R.*) You see the two hats were thrown upon the ground — one here, the other there. I picked one up, without looking, apologized to the gentleman, and as I was in a hurry, I came away with a hat which did not belong to me. (*Forced laugh.*) You see it's very simple.

Jennie. Yes, yes — I see. (*Aside.*) He is *decidedly* an adept; but I will force him to acknowledge yet.

Gail. (*examining hat*). But I've made a good exchange. This is newer than mine.

Jennie (*takes bouquet which she has left on table*). I will be back in a moment, my dear. I am going to carry my bouquet into my room. Now don't run away while I'm gone — will you?

Gail. Could you believe such a thing?

Jennie. I will return immediately. [*Exit door R., with bouquet.*]

Gail. Stay here! I think I will. She nearly caught me that time — and all on account of that miserable hat. Yes, my wife is pretty, sweet, and agreeable, and the best thing I can do is to stay at home and take care of her.

Enter PAULINE, C.

Pauline. A letter, sir!

Gail. A letter?

Pauline. From the lady above, sir.

Gail. (*dissimulating*). The lady above — I don't know her!

Pauline. Possibly, sir; but she sent you this letter.

Gail. (*taking letter*). She does wrong to write to me — very wrong.

Pauline. But she said that it must be delivered to you, even if madame were present.

Gail. Did she say that?

Pauline. That's what she said, sir.

Gail. (*flattered*). Jealousy! But still she is wrong, and I am astonished at such conduct on the part of so distinguished a person. (*Opens letter and reads.*) "You old thief." What? (*Reads again.*) "Old thief, I know that my servants read all my letters, so I will put nothing in this which will compromise you." (*Spoken.*) Thief, indeed! (*Reads.*) "I suppose that you understand me. If you are not in my room in five minutes, I shall know what action to take. Yours — or rather wanting my own — Antonia." (*Repeats.*) "I suppose that you understand me. If you are not in my room in five minutes, I shall know what action to take." (*Spoken.*) This is some joke, but I really don't understand it.

Pauline. Well, sir.

Gail. What?

Pauline. Why, the reply — she is waiting.

Gail. There is no reply.

Pauline. Very well, sir.

Gail. (*to PAULINE during exit*). Say it very politely — add that I laughed very much. (*Returns down, c.*) That will please her, and I do not wish to offend her — but it is a strange joke. I cannot understand it. There ought to be some point to a jest. For instance, if you were to approach a gentleman whom you don't know, and ask him to hold one end of a long string, and then ask another gentleman, whom you know just as little, to hold the other end — and then

[*Exit, c.*]

walk quietly away. Now that is a good joke, but simply because there is some sense to it. (*Looks at letter.*) But *that!* (*Finishes his monologue at R.*)

Enter PAULINE, C.

Pauline. Sir! Sir!

Gail. Well, what is the matter?

Pauline. That lady —

Gail. Another letter?

Pauline. She says that you have only three minutes, and that if you don't come up, she'll come down.

Gail. Well, tell her that I cannot come — that I am seriously engaged. Yes — very seriously — in trying to keep quiet. She takes me for a fool, but she is mistaken.

Pauline. Well, sir!

[*Exit, c.*

Gail. (*same business for exit*). Tell her so very politely. Now what kind of a scrape am I getting into? Is she really capable of — What in the world are we coming to, if a man cannot make a mistake in a flight of stairs without —

Pauline (*enters hurriedly, c.*). Sir! Sir!

Gail. Well?

Pauline. She says you have only two minutes, sir, and she is putting on her gloves.

Gail. Well, what of it?

Pauline. I don't know what has happened, sir, or what she accuses you of — but she spoke to me about sending for the police.

Gail. The police?

Pauline. Yes, sir.

Gail. (*furious*). What the devil can be the matter with the woman? What can she mean?

Pauline. I'm only a poor girl, but if I were to advise you, sir, you ought to speak to that lady. There is but little time, sir.

Gail. Yes, yes — I'll go. But tell her so politely.

Pauline. Well, sir.

[*Exit.*

Gail. (*puts BIC.'s hat on head — seeing that it does not fit, he throws it down savagely on table*). What's that now? Must I be bothered all my life with that hat?

Enter JENNIE, R., with GAIL.'s hat, which she holds behind her.

Jennie (*extremely dignified*). And now, my dear, I hope you will explain to me how *your* hat — (*Presents his hat.*)

Gail. (*taking his hat and putting B.'s on table*). Ah! thank you. (*Puts it on.*) Just in time. (*Opens door, c.*)

Jennie. What, are you going out?

Gail. Yes —

Jennie. Why?

Gail. I will explain by and by.

[*Exit.*

Jennie (*down c.*). And just as I came in with his hat to confound

— to overwhelm him. And I had prepared such a pretty lecture, and at the end of the lecture a pardon prettier still. (*Furiously.*) But now —

Enter BICOQUET desperate.

Bic. They've turned me out, madame.

Jennie. You?

Bic. Yes! This time they turned me out!

Jennie. You here again, sir?

Bic. Ought you not to expect it, since you have let him go up there again? It's your fault. Why didn't you keep him?

Jennie. Is my husband up there?

Bic. He is madame! So naturally — I —

Jennie. Proofs, sir, proofs!

Bic. I anticipate them. (*Showing GAIL's hat.*) Look at that hat.

Jennie. His hat again?

Bic. Precisely.

Jennie. This is too much!

Bic. (*putting hat on table*). And as mine is no longer above, your husband will have to come down bareheaded — when he comes.

Jennie (*exasperated*). And he hadn't been back five minutes — only five minutes.

Bic. How can you help it, madame? Your husband is infatuated.

Jennie (*falls into chair L. of table. — Angrily, to herself*). And he is there again. (*Points above — rises.*)

Bic. Yes, madame, he is there, over our heads. (*Indignantly.*) And the floor doesn't open to swallow them. (*Listening.*) We can hear footsteps.

Jennie (*preoccupied*). We must call him down again, sir.

Bic. That's been my sole object since the commencement of our acquaintance; but how?

Jennie. When she sang just now, we heard her. So if we sing here, they must hear us above.

Bic. Very probably, madame, sound having one quality in common with your husband — it ascends.

Jennie. Then sing, sir.

Bic. I?

Jennie. Certainly! It must be a man's voice. Don't you understand? Jealousy.

Bic. But you see I am always enveloped in a blanket for twelve hours before I attempt to sing; and this evening I did not expect —

Jennie. What difference does it make, provided you sing loud, and that you make noise enough?

Bic. If madame will have the goodness to get me some blankets, I will wrap myself up, and perhaps in twelve hours —

Jennie. No, no! Now — immediately! Come, come! (*Sits at piano.*)

Bic. You see, madame, that my style of music —

Jennie (strikes chord). You are losing time. Quick, quick! (*Bic. sings. — Enter GAIL, frightened, with gray hat on his head. On his entrance, JENNIE rises with dignity. BIC. strikes an attitude. GAIL. pays not the least attention to them.*)

Gail. (frightened). It wasn't a joke. She was on the point of sending for the police. Ten thousand francs. There were ten thousand francs in the bouquet. Ten thousand francs sent by young — what's his name; and she accuses me of having stolen them. (*Notices BIC.*) Ah!

Jennie (to GAIL). Allow me to introduce Monsieur Bicoquet.

Gail. Well, yes — by and by. But the bouquet first. What have you done with the bouquet that I just gave you?

Jennie. That bouquet! Do you dare to speak of it?

Gail. It is in your room, is it not?

Jennie. No, sir; it is not in my room. I threw it out of the window.

Gail. What? When?

Jennie. I threw it away, sir; because I knew where it came from. Do you understand, sir? I know all —

Gail. You have thrown it away! (*Enters precipitately into JENNIE'S room, R.*)

Jennie (disappointed). Did you ever see anything like it?

Bic. (quickly). Did you notice, madame? It is impossible that you should not have noticed. He had a hat —

Jennie. No; I was too much occupied.

Bic. But the hat was gray.

Enter GAILLARD, R.

Gail. (crosses to door, c., and calls). Pauline! — don't she hear? — Pauline!

Jennie (exasperated). O, what shall I do?

Enter PAULINE, who keeps near door, c.

Gail. Quick! Run down and ask the porter if he has picked up a bouquet which was thrown from the window.

Pauline. Yes, sir. (*Exit, c. — GAIL returns down, c.*)

Bic. I think I'd better go up again. (*Crosses towards c.*)

Gail. (stopping him). Remain, sir, I beg you.

Jennie (to GAIL, who does not listen). In a quarter of an hour; — pay attention to what I say, sir; — in a quarter of an hour I'm going to leave this house, to find a refuge with my aunt. You will never see me again. Don't try to defend yourself — it will be useless. Send Pauline to me when she returns. (*Bursts into tears, and exit door, R.*)

Bic. (to GAIL). Well, sir?

Gail. (to PAULINE, who enters). Well?

Pauline. The porter has not seen the bouquet, sir.

Gail. Very well. I will attend to the rest. Go to your mistress' room — she wants you.

Bic. (hercically). Yes, sir, I acknowledge it; it's all true. You have stolen my happiness along with the woman I love; and I, in return, have stolen —

Gail. O, bother that at present. Bicoquet, I believe —

Bic. James Bicoquet.

Gail. (crossing to secretary, R.). Yes, yes, all the same to me. (*Aside.*) I must pay somehow. (*Taking money-drawer from the secretary, and putting it on table, pushes off hats with the drawer.*) In the drawer, 4950 francs. In my portemonnaie and in my pockets (*counting money*), 627. (*Feels in all his pockets.*) What is this? — some sous — 627 francs 30 sous. (*Figures in pocket-book.*) That makes 5577 francs 30 centimes. Not enough to pay ten thousand. (*Calculating.*) The remainder is — (*To Bic.*) Have you 4422 francs 70 centimes about you?

Bic. 4422 francs?

Gail. Yes, and 70 centimes. If you have it, lend it to me.

Bic. (explosively). Well, and I should like to know why?

Gail. Why?

Bic. Yes.

Gail. Because there are situations in which a man of pleasure always expects another man of pleasure to have 4000 francs about him. I am in one of these situations. There were 10,000 francs in the bouquet.

Bic. O!

Gail. Yes, and she demands them, and accuses me of stealing. You understand that I cannot go and tell her that my wife threw the bouquet out of the window. I must pay them — not to-morrow, nor in an hour, but immediately.

Bic. (much interested). Yes, I understand.

Gail. (shaking his hand). Then lend me the money.

Bic. How much did you say — 4000 francs?

Gail. 4422 francs 70 centimes.

Bic. (slowly counting on his fingers). 4422 francs 70 centimes. I haven't got it.

Gail. (angrily). Then why didn't you say so at once. How much have you got? Have you any money at all?

Bic. (drawing money slowly from pocket). I have. 43 francs 25 centimes.

Gail. Let's have them. (*Figures in book.*) That makes 5620 francs 11 sous. Haven't you any more? Look.

Bic. (low, and trying to conceal some bills, which he shows to audience). I have still a note for 1000 francs, and one of 500 — but —

Gail. (who has heard). Give them to me. (*Snatching them.*) Are you afraid? I am known, sir! (*With pride.*) I have a name on change. I am one of those who pay, sir; who always pay — till just this moment.

Bic. Listen to me, sir. I hate you!

Gail. Well, sir; and I. Do you think that after having discovered you in a tête-a-tête with my wife at this hour, that I don't intend to ask an explanation? But not now, sir; not now. How did the figures stand?

Bic. (furious). I know nothing about it.

Gail. (equally furious). Well, sir, I'll tell you — 7120 francs 50 centimes. (*Calmer.*) Who shall I apply to next? My wife? She will profit by the occasion to inform me she has run into debt. Ah, the chambermaid! (*Rings.*) Pauline! Pauline! (*Enter PAULINE, R.*) Why don't you come sooner when I ring?

Pauline. But, sir, I was with madame. She doesn't know which dress to put on to seek a refuge with her aunt.

Gail. With her aunt?

Pauline. Yes, sir. Is it possible that you don't know?

Gail. Well, well, we'll see about all that immediately. Tell me, Pauline, have you saved any of your wages?

Pauline. I have 500 francs, sir.

Gail. Go get them for me. At the same time, step in and see the cook — she ought to have saved something also. Ask her for it on my account. At the same time get what there is left of the house-keeping money. Tell her to give you all the money she has — do you understand? — all she has.

Pauline. Certainly, sir.

[*Exit, c.*]

Gail. (fumbling in his pockets). You have nothing more left, have you, sir?

Bic. (impatiently). No, nothing, at all, sir.

Gail. And to think that all this has happened because there are some men in the world foolish enough to send 10,000 francs to a woman in that manner —

Bic. Little what's-his-name —

Gail. And he calls himself a gentleman. Instead of employing his fortune nobly — or rather — I mean instead of keeping his 10,000 francs — (*Fumbling in pockets.*) You are quite sure that you have nothing left, sir?

Bic. But I told you, sir —

Enter PAULINE, c., napkin in one hand, with her savings, and pitcher in the other, in which are in silver the savings of the cook.

Pauline. Here are my 500 francs, sir. (*Gives napkin to GAIL., who passes it to BIC. — GAIL. figuring all the time.*) Here is the house money — 259 francs 90 centimes; and here are the cook's savings — 1950 francs.

Gail. (book and pencil in hand). 1950 francs saved, and she has been here four months; and when she came she hadn't a sou — twice her wages. Well, I'll reserve it. Pauline, put it all there. (*Points to table.*)

Pauline. The cents also, sir? (*Goes to table.*)

Gail. Everything — all. Put it all there.

Pauline. Here it is, sir. (*Spills money from pitcher into drawer, and exit.* *Bic.* picks up what money has fallen on table and floor. *Gail.*, calculating, crosses, R., and they are on each side of table.)

Gail. (*figuring*). How much does that make, in all — that makes 9823 francs 45 centimes. I must carry her that. Haven't you any more money about you?

Bic. (*sitting R. of table*). Listen to me. I hate you.

Gail. (*still figuring*). So you told me; but that is all reserved. I keep that back along with the cook's savings.

Bic. (*grandly*). I hate you. But I cannot see a gentleman in such perplexity without doing all I can to extricate him. (*Rises, and takes piece of money from the pocket of his waistcoat.*)

Gail. (*aside*). I knew he had something more.

Bic. (*passes piece*). There, take it.

Gail. I was sure of it. (*Examines piece.*) What is this — twenty sous?

Bic. (*nobly*). A piece with a hole in it — a keepsake — and I give it to you.

Gail. Well, that makes 9824 francs 45 centimes. (*Puts the sum into his handkerchief. — The money ought to be composed of the oddest kind of money.*) I will carry her this; and if she is not satisfied, I will offer her your watch. [*Exit, c., with money.*]

Enter JENNIE, R., dressed to go to her aunt.

Jennie. Is he gone?

Bic. (*who has picked up hats, and replaced them on table*). Come in, madame, come in. Have no fear. We need trouble ourselves no longer. I have lent him money.

Jennie. Where is he now?

Bic. Need you ask?

Jennie. Again!!!

Bic. He took a large sum of money — bank-notes, gold, silver, and my twenty sous piece — wrapped them all in a handkerchief, and carried them all to her.

Jennie. (*pulling on gloves furiously*). To my aunt's immediately. You will conduct me there, sir?

Bic. O, certainly; with pleasure. Where does she live, madame?

Jennie. At Rambouillet.

Bic. At Rambouillet? (*Suddenly recollects that he has no money.*) O, goodness!

Jennie. Well, what is the matter.

Bic. (*in despair*). Just my luck. For once in my life I have a chance to run away with a married woman, and — I've lent the husband all my money.

Jennie. What did you say, sir?

Bic. But that makes no difference. We will walk; and when we are tired we will take turns in carrying each other, so that one of us will be resting all the time.

Enter GAIL, with a cap under his arm.

Gail. (to audience). She refused the watch. She has some good traits left.

Bic. (taking cap from him). Allow me to relieve you, sir. I will put it with the others.

Gail. (astonished). What's that?

Bic. There must be a hat factory up stairs. (*Examines cap, and puts it with others.*)

Jennie. Another one!

Bic. Well, it's all the same to me. I've sworn never to love more.

Gail. (to JENNIE). And where are you going now, my dear?

Jennie (dignified). I am going to my aunt's. This gentleman will accompany me.

Gail. This gentleman?

Jennie. Yes, sir — the only protector I have left.

Gail. (amiably). But he cannot accompany you, since they are expecting him up stairs.

Bic. Expecting me?

Gail. (low to BIC.). And this time I swear I will not disturb you again.

Bic. Waiting for me? What strange people we men are. Now that she's waiting for me, I've no desire to go. (*Looks at watch.*) Twenty minutes after twelve. I think the best thing I can do now is to take a carriage and go home to bed. Yes — (*saluting with GAIL's hat, to GAIL.*) — I was going to take your hat again — the force of habit. (*Takes his own hat.*) Once more, adieu. Remember me — I'll remember you.

Gail. Good night, sir. (*Exit, BIC., c. — GAIL. passes him out. — JENNIE crosses, l.*)

Gail. (near JENNIE). Well, Jennie, dear.

Jennie. Well, what?

Gail. (caressing). You heard what the gentleman said. It's twenty minutes after twelve, and —

Jennie. After what has passed, do you dare hope?

Gail. Do you really mean to leave me?

Jennie. I don't wish to make any scene, because it spoils my complexion to weep. But as for pardoning — never!

Gail. Never?

Jennie. Never! Never!! Never!!!

Gail. (coaxing). Never is a long time, and —

Jennie. Well, there, I want to be good, and I will forgive you when —

Gail. When what?

Jennie (laughing). When you bring me back this bouquet — this famous bouquet — which has cost you —

Gail. (bitterly). 10,000 francs.

Jennie. 10,200 francs, my dear.

Gail. Yes — that's very true. I forgot the 200. (*Door bell rings violently.*)

Jennie. Who can that be now?

Bic. appears at the door, the bouquet in his hand.

Bic. Here's the bouquet! Here's the bouquet!

Gail. The bouquet? Yes. Come in, come in.

Bic. (entering). I declare, if this story should be related in any paper, nobody would believe it — and still it's the truth. A coachman was passing the door —

Gail. (looking at bouquet). Just permit me to see the letter. It is there. You may go on now, sir.

Bic. A coachman was passing the door. I stopped him, and told him to take me home. "If it's all the same to you," said he, "would you like an adventure? Let us walk up and down before this house." His language made me suspicious — the more so that, while speaking, the coachman pressed to his heart, and covered with kisses, a bouquet that I seemed to remember. "Where did you get those flowers?" said I to him, in tones of authority. "Just now a lady threw them to me out of the window." He had scarcely finished, than I seized the bouquet, and rang at your door. Now, sir, take it.

Gail. (takes bouquet). The letter! Here it is — attached with a pin. Young what's-his-name gives a great deal of money to women — but he is orderly in his habits.

Jennie. Quick, my dear, quick!

Gail. (taking letter, and giving bouquet to Bic.). "Mademoiselle Antonia Brunet" — that's the one. (*Opens the letter.*) How's this? — no money. (*Reading.*) "My dear girl, I am glad that you applied to me for the 10,000 francs, but unfortunately I cannot send them at present. I regret —" (*Furious.*) And this man calls himself a gentleman. A lady applies to him for 10,000 francs, and he doesn't send them. (*Reading.*) "I regret it exceedingly —" (*Spoken.*) And I, too. (*Reading.*) "But to show you that I still think of you, I send —"

Jennie. You see he sends something.

Gail. (finishing the letter). "I send you a front seat for the theatre."

Jennie. Just what I wanted this evening.

Gail. Yes; but where is this ticket?

Bic. (taking ticket from bouquet). Here — attached with a pin.

Gail. He don't send any money to women — but his habits are orderly.

Bic. (examining ticket). Unfortunately it's for this evening, and it's now a half hour after midnight.

Jennie. O, dear; how unfortunate!

Gail. (takes ticket, and examines it at arm's length). 10,000 francs.

Bic. (to GAIL, and glancing at JENNIE). I will not profit by your

misfortune to disturb you, sir, but you owe me 1543 francs 25 centimes. Now, if you wish, you may pay me twenty sous a day. Every day, for 1543 days and a quarter, I will visit madame, and she shall give me a franc at each visit.

Gail. (gayly). You are pleased to be facetious, sir. You shall have your money to-morrow. (*To JENNIE.*) To-morrow evening, my love, we will go to the theatre.

Jennie. But you can't afford it after this expense.

Gail. Well, it's only 10,000 francs, after all. (*Enthusiastically.*) If the news continues to be bad for a week I can easily regain that.

Bic. Till to-morrow, my friend.

Gail. Till to-morrow. But one thing, my friend, I hope you will promise me. [*False exit.*]

Bic. And what is that?

Gail. Promise me not to return again this evening.

Bic. I promise you. But there is still one thing more. There are two gentlemen waiting outside.

Gail. Two gentlemen?

Bic. Yes, two gentlemen — who have just left up stairs, and who cannot go away, because their hats are here. I entered alone, but, if you wish, I will call them in.

Gail. No, no.

JENNIE takes gray hat and cap, and carries them to BIC.

Bic. Thanks. And to repay you for the pleasure of the evening, I shall take the earliest opportunity of sending madame a "Bouquet."

GAILLARD.

JENNIE:

BICOQUET (*with hats in hand*).

BOWLED OUT;

OR,

A BIT OF BRUMMAGEM.

A Farce,

IN ONE ACT.

BY

H. T. CRAVEN.

BOWLED OUT.

CHARACTERS.

*Royal Princess's Theatre
London, July 9, 1860.*

MR. EZEKIEL YEARNER, an Orator	Mr. H. Widdecomb.
ARLINGTON, a Music Master	Mr. R. Cathcart.
BOB QUORMS, a Painter	Mr. H. Saker.
KIDMAN, a Fisherman	Mr. Collett.
MRS. BREFTON	Mrs. Weston.
MARIAN, her adopted Daughter	Miss Rose Leclercq.
SARAH ANN, her Maid	Miss Carlotta Leclercq.

SCENE: *Interior of a Villa, near a Country Town.*

Time in representation, 50 minutes

COSTUMES: *Modern.*

BOWLED OUT.

SCENE. — *A handsomely furnished apartment. French windows, c., through which are seen a garden and a country town in the distance. Buffet, piano, sofa, large arm-chair, — door, with practicable lock, L. 1 E. — door, R. 2 E. — a panel on the L. D., newly painted.*

MRS. BREFTON *discovered seated, R. — SARAH ANN, a servant, standing before her, L. C.*

Mrs. B. 'Tis useless talking, Sarah! I will not put up with it.

Sarah. Well, mum, you seem to have put down against me everything that you could.

Mrs. B. You really are not to be borne.

Sarah. But as I was born twenty year ago, you can't help yourself, mum.

Mrs. B. You've broken my whole service of crockery, one piece after another.

Sarah. You're laboring under a mistake, mum!

Mrs. B. Well, you or I *must* have done it. Perhaps you infer that I did?

Sarah. The old cat broke the better half. I don't mean you, mum.

Mrs. B. I'm sorry to see you descend to deception, — not to say falsehood.

Sarah. No, mum, — you'd better not say that, mum, 'cause I happen to have a friend who's acquainted with a lawyer's clerk.

Mrs. B. Even your breakages I might look upon as unavoidable accidents. But I have other and more serious faults to find with you.

Sarah. It wouldn't be you, mum, if you hadn't.

Mrs. B. That's one of them, — you answer.

Sarah. Well, mum, — if I answer, what more do you want?

Mrs. B. Your levity — your dress — your deportment, are all objectionable to me; and you've acquired such a romantic way of expressing yourself, that I'm disgusted.

Sarah. In fact, there's no pleasing you, nohow.

Mrs. B. I have also reason to know you have formed a connection in the town with a young man; and I gave you distinctly to understand I allowed no followers.

Sarah. Well, mum, perhaps you'll put down nature, and change the order o' things altogether; and since you touch me on that point, I think it's high time to speak. Are servants supposed to be without hearts? I should like to have that properly understood. Does the scrubbing-brush blight the 'onest' and which 'olds it, so that it cannot be bestowed on some worthy hobject of the hopposite sect?

Mrs. B. Gracious, Sarah! your h's!

Sarah. Drat the h's. I'm too exasperated! When you agreed to give me twelve pounds a year, tea, and sugar, and half a pint o' small beer a day, did you suppose you bought all my affection in a dried-up state? If you did, you made a slight mistake. Nature will be nature; and when I see you encourage Mr. Yearner to make love to your adopted daughter, Miss Marion, I say to myself, "What's sauce for goose, is sauce for pig." Now, mum, I've spoke my mind modestly, but fearfully, and courageously.

Mrs. B. Enough! I give you —

Sarah. Thank you, mum. I give you an hour's warning — I shall go, mum, directly.

Mrs. B. To your ruin. I anticipate it. However I will give you a character only on one condition; that you listen to the salutary advice of my dear friend Mr. Yearner, — that excellent young man who has such an extraordinary talent for extemporaneous discourse, and who is now approaching.

Enter YEARNER, dressed in methodistical style, L. D.

My dear brother in sentiment, I rejoice to see you so opportunely. Your presence was needed to —

Yearner. Minister to the welfare of erring humanity, — that is my vocation, beloved sister Brefton.

Mrs. B. Exactly. This poor girl is, I fear, in a perilous condition of mind!

Sarah. Gammon!

Yearner. She exclaimeth "Gammon!" Alas! alas! oh, that her eyes may be opened!

Sarah. Well, you're enough to make any one stare, between you!

Mrs. B. (R.) She is about to cast herself on the world — to unite herself, perchance, to some man of frivolity.

(YEARNER, C., turns up his eyes and groans.)

Sarah. (L.) Taken poorly, sir?

Mrs. B. And with her erring notions — but, confiding as I always do in you, I have before acquainted you with her faults.

Speak to her before she goes, so that the warning voice may reach her heart, and she will not leave without food for serious meditation.

Sarah. I should like my dinner before I go, if that's what you mean.

Yearner (*putting a great chair before him, and leaning over the back, like a pulpit*). I shall divide my discourse into seventeen heads.

Sarah. What a *nobby* discourse it will be!

Yearner. Firstly, I shall discuss the all-important question which it behoves every one to ask — the great — the absorbing question, "What's to become of us all?"

Sarah. That's what the picnic party said when they saw the mad bull.

Yearner. Ah, the heart, my young friend, is a mad bull which we have to guard against; it tosses us hither and thither and then, where are we?

Sarah. Topsy-turvy, I should think.

Mrs. B. Beautiful!

Yearner. Ah, let us conquer the heart, the wicked heart, the naughty heart! let us mortify the flesh!

Sarah. Doctor Febril said that when flesh mortified it was a dangerous symptom.

Yearner. The heart is a bull, and vanity is its horn; yea, a horn that driveth to destruction. Now, let us consider, what is a horn? There are horns of various sorts.

Sarah. A French horn, for instance.

Yearner. There is the short horn and the long horn, the curly horn and the straight horn, the horn that goes this way and the horn that goes that way. Oh, 'tis an enticing horn that points to the path of pleasure! We rush where it points; we are engulfed; we are lost!

Sarah. Well, I should ask the first pleeceman I came across to direct me.

Yearner. We are lost! Oh, then we return to the great question, "What is to become of us?"

Sarah. Is that an end of the tale?

Yearner. Now for my second head, "What are we to do?"

Mrs. B. One moment, brother; I have a call to make in the town. Finish your discourse with this benighted girl, and by that time I shall have returned. (*Aside.*) What a charming speaker he is! Oh, that I could take it all down in short-hand; for, as he truly says, "What is to become of us?"

[*Exit, L. C.*

Yearner. Ah, my comely sister, what are we to do?

Sarah. I give it up. I can't stop guessing your conundrums — I want to pack up my box — that's what I'm to do!

Yearner. You are pretty, — yea, comely to the eye as the

fountain to the parched wayfarer. An ample figure — ah, and a neat foot. Trust to my guidance, and then —

Sarah (mocking him). What is to become of me? (*A single knock is heard.*) There's a knock at the door. I suppose I may as well be magnanimous, and answer it, though I *am* going away; so I leave you to brush up your second head, and find out what we're to do! [*Exit L. 1 E.*]

Yearner (somewhat altering his manner). I could well wish that damsel to remain as my wife's abigail when I am united to Marian. I love to look on the fair works of creation, which, like the lilies of the valley, are manifestly designed, not for one, but the universal eye. Oh, how goodly is virtue; or rather, how good is the *character* for virtue! It shall win for me a wife with a goodly inheritance. Oh, how goodly is money!

Re-enter SARAH, L. 1 E., with BOB QUORMS, a painter.

Sarah. This is the new panel that's to be grained maple, like the others.

Bob. All right; I won't be long about it.

Sarah. Never mind this gentleman; he's only a lecturer.

Bob (looking at YEARNER). Lor'! why, he used to hold forth in the fields at Weymouth.

Yearner. You mistake, my friend; it was not I.

Bob. Then it was a fellow very much like you; but he used to get as tight as a drum, and —

Yearner. It was not I! (*To SARAH.*) Where is Miss Marian?

Sarah. In the flower-garden.

Yearner. I will betake myself thither. (*To BOB.*) You are an operative. In the hour of meditation read this pamphlet. (*Offers a tract.*) 'Tis entitled "What is to become of us all?" and is addressed more particularly to painters and glaziers.

Bob. Blow your tracks! I read one once, and it made me quite uncomfortable. Talk about conscience *pricking* you, — why, sir, mine was running a spit through me all day long.

Yearner. Happy effect! Read on, read on, and tremble! Oh, how goodly it is to tremble! [*Exit at window, C. to R.*]

Sarah. O Bob!

Bob. O Sarah Ann!

Sarah. Have you turned painter, then?

Bob. I know something of the trade, and as I wanted to stay in the town to be in your vicissitude I went and offered my services to Turps, in the market-place, and strange enough, the very first job he puts me on is this — a graining job — which I *don't* understand.

Sarah. But, Bob, I'm going away; I've discharged myself, and go off in an hour.

Bob. You do? you don't!

Sarah. Don't I? I do! And now, Mr. Robert Quorms, as I have no parents here to do it for me, I must ask it plainly, What are your intentions?"

Bob. Strictly honorable, I assure you. Just hold my paint-pot while I swear it.

Sarah. You'll allow for circumstances; but do you mean matrimony soon?

Bob. Matrimony I mean, as soon as circumstances will allow. O Sarah! when first I met you in the butcher's shop buying kidneys to make gravy of, I felt a sensation. My dreams that night were of kidneys; I ate nothing but kidney potatoes for a week afterwards; visions of kidneys were constantly floating before my eyes — in their own gravy.

Sarah. I dare say. But who and what are you? That's what I want to know. There's something romantic in your conversation and appearance. (*Turns him round, showing paint on his trousers.*) Where did you come from? (*Theatrically.*) Mysterious being, who and what are you?

Bob. Sarah, I'm a young man who knows what's right, and is always trying to do it, but somehow or other, circumstances are always shoving me out of the right path, and then my conscience begins to work; and you've no idea how my conscience does work when it begins, — turns my bosom into a regular workshop, and goes in for overtime, — a twenty-four hour movement.

Sarah. But you haven't perforated anything wrong, have you?

Bob. Oh, I'm always a-doing something wrong, — can't help it. I've done wrong to deceive my master and undertake a graining job when I know I'm not up to the knocker. I'm a rogue *in grain*, and my conscience has got another job come in to work at.

Sarah. Well, Robert, you must relate to me all that relates to yourself another time. I must go and pack up my box, for missus has been so pert that I cannot look over it. I don't wish to be rash in such an affair, but I put it to you, as a man and a gentleman — can we be married to-morrow?

Bob. Well, in these off-hand little affairs, you see, cash is in some degree necessary. Now, as a man, — to say nothing of the gentleman, — I'm concerned to say that, as far as I am concerned, I'm not qualified to vote.

Sarah. Can't you dispose of your valuables?

Bob. My valuables are of no value, that's the worst of it; but, Sarah Ann, I possess a secret which is perhaps worth something.

Sarah. Mysterious and unscrutable being, what do you mean?

Bob. My uncle on my mother's side was a rascal.

Sarah. Lor!

Bob. Though I don't think he's so bad as he used to be. However, two year ago, I happened to come across this Uncle Jack, and while lying in his hut one night, I heard him tell some friend of his part of a dreadful secret.

Sarah. Merciless powers!

Bob. That set my conscience a-working and a-pricking, and a-spitting me, and that brought me into this town.

Sarah. What was it? Mysterious creature, tell me, — what was it, — *mur-der*? Oh, speak, or see me fall sensible at your boots, — was it murder?

Bob. No; stealing a sleeping infant, — a kidnapping case. Sixteen years ago, he stole a child from a Mrs. Brefton. Now d'ye catch a glimmer? (*Pokes her with the paint-brush.*)

Sarah. Gracious! why, my mistress lost a beauteous infant sixteen years ago, and adopted Miss Marian to supply its place.

Bob. Where the real child is now, I don't know, — most likely dead and gone. I couldn't get at that, but I got at this, which I heard him say he kept in an old trunk. (*Pulls out handbill and reads.*) "Fifty pounds reward. Child lost. Any one who will give such information as may lead to the recovery of a child three years old, shall receive the above reward. The said child is named Lucinda; is marked on the left wrist with a mole," and so on. "Apply to the police office, or to Mrs. Brefton, the Hoe, Plymouth." Now, my conscience set to pricking and working till I stole this, and a little frock that the child had on when taken, and which was also in the box; and then I began tracing out Mrs. Brefton, till at last I tracked her down here, and down I came with a heart as big as a bullock's, and here I lost it in a butcher's shop.

Sarah. And what do you mean to do in the matter now?

Bob. Well, I did mean, when I had found the mother, to try and find the daughter, and bring 'em together. There would have been a grand climacterix, — the *Times* would give me a leader, — you'd see Bob Quorms figuring in *The Lives of Remarkable Men*. Fancy, Bob Quorms, a remarkable man, in monthly parts.

Sarah (*mysteriously*). Robert!

Bob. Sarah Ann!

Sarah. My brain has given birth to an immense idea.

Bob. I'll father it, if it's like *me*.

Sarah. This child, you say, is probably dead.

Bob. No, I didn't say probably. I said most likely.

Sarah. At all events, she's not likely to turn up. Mrs. Brefton's rich; — there's a fortune waiting for us, — I'll be the daughter!

Bob. You?

Sarah. I'll do it. I know how they do these things in

novels. I take in the *London Journal*, and we'll take in Mrs. Brefton. Get me the frock.

Bob. It won't fit you, bless you; it was made for a child three year old; it'll be up to there!

Sarah. Never mind, I want it.

Bob. But my conscience —

Sarah. In one word, if ever you hope for the consumption of our union, assist me in this plot. I shall fancy I'm acting a play. Now, sir, do you love me, or do you not?

Bob. Here I am, the victim of circumstances again — I consent.

Sarah. Then you must tell me all the particulars you know.

Bob. But the mole —

Sarah. Aint you a painter? Can't you paint one on me?

Bob. Paint you! I aint a hanimal painter. I'm an 'ouse painter.

Sarah. Surely you can make a spot on my wrist?

Bob. A little oak color, — I've got it here.

Enter MARIAN, followed by YEARNER, C. from R.

Marian. Don't tease, Mr. Yearner. You never let me have a moment's peace. Sarah, who is this?

Sarah. The painter, miss, come to grain this new panel; but there's a job for him downstairs as well, so he can do that first. Come along, Mr. Painter. *[Exit L. 1 E.]*

Bob. Oh, ah! my conscience! What a pricking sensation!

[Exit, following SARAH, L. 1 E.]

Yearner. Now to discuss my seventh head. When, dam-damsel, are we to be united in the bonds of wedlock?

Marian (*aside*). Never, I hope! (*Aloud.*) Now, my good Mr. Yearner —

Yearner. Call me Ezekiel, — I shall love to hear you call me Ezekiel.

Marian. Well, then, — Ezekiel!

Yearner. Oh!

Marian. What's the matter?

Yearner. I groaned with pleasure.

Marian. Then perhaps you'll laugh with pain when I tell you that I'm in no hurry to call you, or any man, husband. To tell you the candid truth, I am not in love with you.

Yearner. That matters not, maiden. It will come — verily it will come — and think (*looking round*), the good Mrs. Brefton desires it. Mrs. Brefton will give you a portion — Mrs. Brefton will die — she waxeth weak already — Mrs. Brefton will leave us wealth. All this will you utterly forfeit if you do not espouse Ezekiel Yearner.

Marian. Can *that* hope influence you?

Yearner. Lucre! Mammon! No, I value it not; it is de-

testable; but we may as well have it, nevertheless. No, I would gratify my dear sister Brefton with the sight of two innocent hearts (both dear to her) linked together. Oh, what a goodly sight it will be when we are linked together! — the rose and the lily shall not blend more harmoniously than Eze-kiel Yearner and Marian Kidman.

Marian. Which is the rose, and which is the lily, Mr. Gardener? I'm no great beauty, and I'm sure *you're* none! A white neckcloth! I abominate white neckcloths!

Yearner. I will encompass me in a red one to pleasure thee, — yea, a scarlet choker with spots.

Marian. Straight hair! I hate straight hair!

Yearner. I will have it curled, — yea, greased with the grease of the bear.

Marian. Oh, you're oily enough already. But I should choose a man of 'the world; you are too methodistical for my taste!

Yearner. My talent for holding forth is vast. To gratify thee I will change my way of life. I will become a mover of the multitude — a political orator! Fancy, oh, fancy your be-loyed husband a senator, on his fancy legs — I mean, fancy him on his legs, — "Hear!" and cheers!

Marian (aside). I can fancy you anywhere rather than with me! (*Aloud.*) Sit down, Mr. Yearner, and I will appeal to you. (*They sit.*) Mrs. Brefton has been kind to me — very kind; I was a poor, ignorant girl when she adopted me. She has educated me liberally, and I have been happy, — perhaps more happy before we knew you; but that has arisen from your mistake, in thinking that I might be led to love you. *I never can!* Now if you act up to your professed principles, as a good man, — and I hope you are so, — abandon a suit which amounts to persecution, and leave me free, — to respect you with a grateful heart.

Yearner (jumping up). Hang your grateful heart! Give you up! If I do, may I be — accounted unwise! (*A double knock is heard.*) Mrs. Brefton has returned; she shall tell you her determination with her own lips.

Enter ARLINGTON, L. 1 E., with a roll of music.

Marian. Here is my music-master! You will allow me to take my music-lesson, will you not.

Arling. Good-morning, miss! I am rather late this morning, but I shall have pleasure in staying an extra half hour to make up for the five minutes I am behind time. Oh, is this Yearner? How are you, Yearner? I've heard of you, though I never had the what-d'-ye-call-it of seeing you before.

Yearner. Somewhat free for a jobbing minstrel! Here is a tract, read it; it is addressed more particularly to fiddlers

and piccolo players, with a few arguments for backsliding trombones.

Arling. (*doubling his fist*). And here is a pamphlet, addressed most particularly to impertinent and meddling hypocrites, with a knock-down argument for unwelcome intruders.

Yearner. Oh that Mrs. Brefton were here! Oh that she would permit me to order you out of the house!

Arling. But as she is not here, permit me to request *you* to leave the room, while I give Marian -- I mean Miss Kidman, her lesson.

Yearner. What, leave you with --

Arling. Yes -- go and reflect on my pamphlet. (*Shows fist.*)

[*Exit YEARNER, hurriedly, R.*]

And is it to such a creature as this that your protectress would anite you?

Marian. Arthur, I feel that I can never submit to it! Much as I love Mrs. Brefton, my repugnance is too great for gratitude even to set aside. What shall I do?

Arling. (R. C.). Read this song. I have put new words to it.

Marian (L. C.). What! out of your own head? How clever!

Arling. Say, rather, out of my own heart. Read!

Marian (*reads*). "Trust to me, love, I am here --

Trust to me, love, do not fear."

Oh, that's very pretty -- so simple!

Arling. Yes, there's simplicity about it. Go on!

Marian (*reads*). "Though the wicked world assail ye,
Timely aid shall never fail ye;
Though another slimy wooer,
Vow that he will prove the truer --"

I like the slimy wooer!

Arling. You don't mean that?

Marian. I mean the expression is good -- "slimy wooer!" so Tennysonian.

Arling. Think so? It's better as you go on!

Marian. And all out of your own head too! (*Reads.*)

"Turn and see upon his knee,
One who dies for love of thee;
Listen -- frown not -- seal his bliss,
And his pardon with a kiss."

How nice! that comes in so naturally!

(*Turns and sees ARLINGTON upon his knee -- he seizes her hand, and kisses it rapturously -- at this moment*)

Enter YEARNER, followed by MRS. BREFTON, R.

Yearner (R. C.). Ah, Beelzebub! Behold, he kisseth her hand! He is the wolf in the fold. He would devour my pet lamb!

Mrs. B. (R.). Can I believe my eyes?

Yearner. Abomination of abominations! If this be permitted, what, I ask — oh, what is to become of us all?

Mrs. B. Marian, speak. What have you to say?

Marian (c.). Nothing, dear mamma.

Mrs. B. Fie, fie!

Yearner. Yea, verily, shameless lamb!

Arling. (L.). Look here, sir. I do not permit such words to this lady from any one who wears male attire. Mrs. Brefton, I shall not attempt any excuse for the fact you have discovered, except the irresistible charms of Miss Marian. I love her deeply — truly.

Yearner. Disgusting disclosure! O, wicked wolf!

Mrs. B. And have I been paying you for three months for this? Have I taken a serpent to my bosom?

Yearner (correcting her). Nay, sister — to *your house* — she speaks figuratively.

Mrs. B. But leave my house this instant. Mr. Yearner, open the door for this man — expel him if he hesitates.

Yearner (crosses to door, L., opens it and stands with the handle in his hand). Depart, O wolf, from the fold — and take with you this pamphlet. It is addressed more particularly to wolves.

(*ARLINGTON walks coolly up to him, and as he is speaking, takes him by the scruff of the neck, puts him out at the door, locking it.*)

Arling. Now, dear madam, allow me to talk reasonably to you.

Marian. Do, dear mamma.

Arling. Would you think for a moment of sacrificing dear Marian to that sleeky thing?

Marian. Don't, dear mamma.

Yearner (outside). I hear you. I'm sleeky! Yea, through the key-hole.

Arling. Your money is all that he covets. As for you, personally, he would, to expedite his views, as soon give you a dose of prussic acid as not. (*A bump is heard without, L.*)

Yearner (without). Open the door, I have fainted — yea, I have fainted on the bottom stair!

Mrs. B. I am speechless with horror at your malicious allegations. Once for all, if Marian rejects my dear brother Yearner, I will abandon her to her fate, and adopt him in her place. And now I shall open this door, and prevent me at your peril! (*Unlocks and opens the door, L.*)

(*YEARNER, who has been kneeling without at the key-hole, falls in, — he rises as SARAH, gaudily dressed in crinoline and feathers rushes in, L.*)

Sarah. The momentous moment has arrived — the time has come!

Mrs. B. For you to leave, I suppose? I will pay you your wages by and by. I am too much agitated now. Go downstairs, and wait. (*Crosses to R.*)

Sarah (L.). Oh, my 'art's a-busting!

Mrs. B. Well, if you regret your conduct, and wish to stay —

Sarah. Look at me, dear, beloved old individual! Gaze on me, and let nature do the rest!

Mrs. B. Are you mad?

Sarah. No, I am not mad — by 'evven, I am not mad! I've bottled up my feelings too long. The wire is snapped, and Guinness's stout's nothing to my nevervessence! Why do you think I so long put up with your impudence? Because I loved you. Why did I dress in smart bonnets and crinoline? To do you credit. Why did I educate my mind, and take in the *Family Herald*? That I might not disgrace you by my illiteracy. Now the time's come for the disclosury. (*To the others.*) Stand a little backer, please. (*Theatrically.*) Mother, — mother, behold your daughter, — your long-lost child! (*Attitude.*)

Mrs. B. What do you mean?

Sarah (pulling a child's scarlet frock out of her red reticule). Did you ever see a pinafore that used to cover this afore? Take it in your paternal hand, and look at it. Ah!

Mrs. B. Mercy on me! I made it myself! It is — it is hers!

Sarah. And did you ever see such a thing as this afore? Stand back, will you; you'll see just as well — a mole on my wrist?

Mrs. B. Is it possible? My child! my child! (*Faints on the sofa, R.*)

(*MARIAN falls into ARLINGTON'S arms — SARAH suddenly remembers that she ought to faint.*)

Sarah (to YEARNER). Now, stupid, look out, — *Run off!* (*Faints in YEARNER'S arms, L.*)

Yearner. Wonderful revelation! And in my arms she seeketh support!

Arling. (C.). Dear Marion, look up! (*Kisses her.*)

Yearner. Kiss her again, amorous young minstrel. I will not harm thee. Fear me not!

Arling. Fear you?

Yearner. I yearn to see all human beings blest. I renounce her — I bestow her on thee!

Sarah (starting up and pushing YEARNER away). But my mother, — my blessed old mother! There she lies like a bundle of linen, and no one looks her up and sorts her. (*Goes over to her, R.*) Come, cheer up, missus — mother, I mean. I'll be a

good daughter, let me have all my own way, and you'll find me the best girl going.

Mrs. B. (recovering). Was it a dream? (*Looking round.*) No, there she stands. Alas, what a discovery! Are you, indeed, my child?

Sarah. Can you doubt it? Everybody's always noticed we're as like as two peas — only I'm a green pea, and you're a gray one.

Mrs. B. To find you thus!

Sarah. Aint I smart enough for you? You ought to be glad to find me anyhow! You're the talented authoress of my being — these innocent arms have twined round your neck in infanticide — surely you're going to give me a kiss and a benediction!

Mrs. B. Yes, I will; but not now, — not now! My feelings —

Yearner. Verily, I will be deputy. Damsel, accept a mother's kiss. (*Kisses SARAH.*) Again —

Sarah. That'll do — a little of that goes a long way!

Mrs. B. Who found you, child? Who brought you up?

Sarah. I was stole one summer's day, when I was asleep on the Hoe, where the nussmaid had left me, while she walked on the beach with a full corporal of marines, and I was brought up by — But I'll tell you all about that to-morrow, and how I found out the name of my mother, and entered her service just to break the matter gently to her, which I've done. Now, of course, I'm a lady, and shall wear silk stockings, and Balmoral boots. But you don't look nigh so delighted as you ought to!

Mrs. B. (bursts into tears). My hope's destroyed! I expected to have atoned for any errors of my life by conferring my worldly havings on this good and excellent man; but a mother's duty is paramount. Poor Yearner!

Yearner. Grieve not for me, my sister. I am but a poor vessel — an earthen pot, which floats hither and thither on the tide of circumstance. For your sake I will sacrifice myself! Oh, what a glorious thing to make you happy, sister! It is your duty to love this girl, and bestow your wealth on her, and I — even I, will bestow myself on her. I will cleave unto her instead of yonder one.

Mrs. B. Good man! self-sacrificing man!

Arling. (aside). Slimy crocodile!

Sarah. Oh, but I'm engaged to a smart young painter, who'll break his heart if I cut him!

Mrs. B. Thwarted again! Now, hear my fixed determination. Accept this good young man as your future husband, or I disown you. I will never acknowledge you as my daughter — never! I am resolved — all the world shall not turn me! I — oh, this is too much! I faint! Bear me to — my chamber!

Arling. Slimy, bear her to her chamber!

Yearner (*catches her, and with great exertion and difficulty, bears her away, saying*) Sister, this is a *heavy* trial! Is thy chamber handy? Don't be cast down! Nay, I shall drop you — oh! (*Gets her off, R. — a fall is immediately heard outside.*)

Sarah. Ah, my precious mother is down on the door-mat. Miss, I'm so sorry to put your nose out of joint — but right's right, you know. As for the young gentleman, I shall employ him to instruct me in the rudiments of music, though I shall secure the services of an imminent professor to teach me the alimentary part. And I'll make the old lady do something handsome for you, miss!

Marian (*taking her hand*). She has already been good to me, and I congratulate you on finding your dear mother. I could almost rejoice that it has rid me of the attentions of that man!

Arling. Dear girl, despair not. I have nothing — but you shall share it with me.

Sarah. I shall pretend to accept Yearner, just to put my young man to the proof. I shall let him break his heart — won't that be fun? and then cure him in a moment by telling him I love him, and him only. Won't that be like a play? As for Yearner, I'll shock him, and then he'll denounce me.

Arling. Shock him? Not while you are likely to have money. The best plan will be — for I believe him to be a hypocrite — to draw him into some snare, and thoroughly expose him to Mrs. Brefton. Leave that to me.

Sarah. Well, we'll try both plans. I can hear him coming back. Can't you two lovers — for I know you *are* lovers! bless you, I can see it — don't blush, can't you lovers walk into the garden for five minutes, while I shock this good creature with his “yea — verily”?

Arling. Come, Marian, that's a very good suggestion. (*Singing.*) “Come into the garden, Maud —”

Sarah. None of your maudlin songs — we'll make Yearner sing by and by. You'll see how I'll draw him out!

Arling. And then we'll shut him up.

[*Exeunt ARLINGTON and MARIAN, C. to R.*]

Sarah. Did any one ever see such a scarecrow? As though a man couldn't be good without looking like a guy!

Enter YEARNER, door, R.

Yearner. Your dear mother has retired to bed, and has signified her intention of remaining there for the rest of the day, to recover from the shock to her system. Therefore, dear child, we can bill and coo to our heart's content. Of a truth, thou art comely — oh!

Sarah. Come, I should like a glass of wine, to bring my system round; and as I'm now the young mistress, I've a right

to help myself. Here are my mother's keys. (*Goes to the buffet at back, R.*) What would you like, black sheep? Here's wine and spirits — make yourself at home. (*Puts liquor-stand, tumblers, and glasses on the table, R. C.*)

Yearner. Truly, I drink but sparsely — yet will I have a toothful. (*Pours himself out a tumbler of brandy, and drinks it off.*)

Sarah. That's brandy, young fellow, d'ye know that? (*Helping herself to a glass of wine.*)

Yearner. Wine is good, and sent for our delectation. (*Pours out wine.*) I drink to your beatitude. (*Drinks.*) Truly, I think I could contribute to that end. I will be a dove-like mate (*poking her with his finger*) — yea, day and night will I love thee!

Sarah. Oh, but you're too straight-laced for me! Fancy a young girl of my spirit with a husband like a parish pump — and his “yea,” “nay,” and “verily!” You must spruce up, my fine fellow.

Yearner. I will be what you desire. I will become a fast man, — yea, I will wear peg-tops.

Sarah. And take me to the races in a dog-cart, like a lady —

Yearner. Verily, I will back the favorite against the field.

Sarah. I am fond of balls — you must take me to dances — you must dance yourself —

Yearner. Yea, I will polk!

Sarah. Give card parties —

Yearner. Trump my adversary's court-card!

Sarah. Take me to theatres —

Yearner. Ah, to see the Traviata —

Sarah (aside). Mr. Arlington was right — there's no shocking him!

Yearner. But we must keep all this a secret till we are married — till — till thou hast the goodly dowry — till the old dowager goes the way of all flesh. Ah, ah! that will not be long first, and then — oh! oh! (*Pokes her with his finger*).

Sarah (aside). The hypocritical villain! (*Aloud.*) Come, help yourself again!

Yearner. Truly I will, for my heart is leaping with joy. (*Fills his glass, and drinks.*) Sweetheart, I pledge thee. (*Drinks again.*) Then it is settled — we are betrothed, are we not?

Sarah (going to the window — aside). Ah, there he is at the gate, and in his best clothes, poor fellow. (*Aloud.*) There's my young man as was. He'd better come up, and then you can tell him what has taken place, for I daren't do it. We must behave handsomely to him — tell him the truth, and ask him to have a glass of something. (*She beckons to BOB.*) He's coming the back way.

Yearner. Is he pugnacious? (*In arm-chair.*)

Sarah. No, rather snubbed. (*Aside.*) Does he mean his nose?

Yearner (aside). Then will I bully him. Yea, I will ex-
nilarate myself with another glass, and terrify him with my
demeanor. (*Again helps himself to drink.*)

Enter BOB QUORMS, in his Sunday suit, L.

Bob. Ah, Sarah Ann, I'm glad you called me up, for my con-
science was a-pricking so, that I couldn't stand solitude — and
who do you think I saw in the town? Why, Uncle Jack, the
fisherman, that I was telling you about; but he didn't see me,
and — Lord, how well you look in that dress! Give me a kiss
for what I've done.

*Yearner (who is getting slightly queer from drink, comes for-
ward).* Brimstone and treacle — no, I mean fire and brimstone!
who talks about such a profane thing as kicking — I mean
kissing?

Bob. I didn't see you, governor, and if I had, I don't know
that I've said any harm; she happens to be my young woman.

Yearner. Stan' there! I shall divide my heads into seven-
teen discourses. First — what's to become of us all? Lastly,
she's going to become Mrs. Yearner, and you've nothing to do
with her. Yea, put that in your smoke and pipe it.

Bob. Going to become Mrs. Deuce! She's not such a fool
as *that*, I know. Speak, Sally, why don't you tell this fellow
he's making an ass of himself.

Sarah. Alas! Bob, it's too true!

Bob. What, that he's an ass?

Yearner. Oh, what a goodly thing is a donkey!

Sarah. I'm sacrificed at the altar of duty. My mother has
commanded me to accept his hand.

Bob. Then you're a — I won't say what you are! But he's
a — I won't say what he is!

Yearner. I'll have a glass of brandy, and then I'll talk to
you, my beloved young friend. (*Goes up and helps himself.*)
Now, woss that you shed 'bout me, ole fellow?

Bob. Why, you're a hypocritical rascal — a black sheep,
that taxes others with faults he commits himself — you, you're
no man! you're a nincumpoop!

Yearner. My lamb, can you stand by and hear your darling
Ezekiel called such an obnoxious thing as an income-tax?

Bob. And you, Sally — I see how it is — you sell yourself
for money! After my loving you to the pitch I did, and set-
ting my conscience a-working over-time for your sake! This
is, indeed, a trial!

Yearner. Trial — I'm the judge. Pris'n'r, I fine you guilty.
I shall pronounce the awful sentence — I put on the black cap.
(*Puts on his hat.*) I sentence you to be taken hence —

Bob. I'll be hanged if I stand this! (*Bonnets YEARNER,
knocking his broad-brimmed hat completely over his face, then
kicks him.*) And now, Miss Sarah Ann, look out for yourself

— you'll hear of me again, and future generations will see my wax-work in Madame Tassaüd's chamber of horrors! O my conscience!

[*Rushes out, door L.*]

Sarah (calling after him). But, Bob! Bob! Robert Quorms! He's gone, poor fellow! I meant to tell him the truth!

(*YEARNER, who has been making ineffectual and convulsive efforts to remove the hat from his face, strikes out right and left, and hits ARLINGTON, who is just entering with MARIAN, C., — ARLINGTON knocks him on to the sofa.*)

Arling. What is the matter?

Yearner (getting his hat off). Murder's the matter! I'm wounded in all my vital parts! Thieves! murder! what is to become of us all?

Sarah. Don't make such a noise — we shall have mother down upon us directly.

Yearner. My lamb with mint sauce — my wife, with eight thousand, are you there? Ah, young Twiddlekeys, is that you? Help yourself to some branny, ole fellow. (*Pours out, and drinks.*)

Marian. Gracious! what is the matter with him?

Arling. (*aside to SARAH*). I see our plot is far advanced. I guessed this was a weakness of his.

Sarah. There's a husband for you! I was determined that when I did choose one, it should be either a parson or a soldier.

Yearner. I'll be a soldier. Yea, I'll join the volunteers, and practise the goose-step. How should I look as a rifle?

Arling. (*blackening a cork*). You want a mustache. (*Paints a mustache on him.*)

Sarah. Now brush up your hair — that's it — and this red velvet reticule will make a capital military cap. (*Puts red bag on his head.*) There's a military man for you. (*A fiddler without strikes up a polka.*) There's old Wilks, the blind fiddler.

Arling. Now for a dance. (*Polks MARIAN round the room.*)

(*SARAH seizes YEARNER and dances him round till he whirls into MRS. BREFTON'S arms, as she enters with her nightcap on, R. — MRS. BREFTON screams as he polks her grotesquely, till they both sink exhausted on the sofa, — MRS. BREFTON, R. — YEARNER, L.*)

Yearner (sitting up). Wha's to become of us all?

Mrs. B. (sitting up). Police! police!

Yearner. It's Mother Brefton, — I'll pick her up. (*Gets up, and attempts to lift her.*)

Mrs. B. (*getting up, and repulsing him*). Can this be the good Mr. Yearner? What a disgraceful sight! Inebriated! (*He is approaching her.*) Touch me not — I'm disgusted!

Yearner. No, you are not disgusting. Only you mustn't

keep us out of the money too long. You're sure you've made your will all right?

Mrs. B. What do I hear?

Yearner. Here's my wife — she loves me to distrashion!

Sarah. Monster, away! After what you have said to my parent, do you think I'll ever give you my hand? Insult me if you will, but spare, oh, spare my maternal mother. (*Crosses to R. and embraces MRS. BREFTON. YEARNER is approaching her.*) Away, or see me fall a blackened corsair at your feet. (*Attitude.*)

Yearner (*coolly blowing his nose*). Wha's the row?

Enter BOB QUORMS and KIDMAN, a fisherman, L.

Bob. Now, Sarah Ann, I'm come to put a stopper on your game. My conscience hasn't been a-working for nothing — this is my Uncle Jack!

Marian. My father!

Arling. What?

Mrs. B. Kidman!

Bob. Now, speak up, Uncle Jack!

Kid. (*pointing to SARAH*). That girl aint your daughter, — it's an imposition!

Bob. Hear — hear!

Sarah (*aside*). It's all up!

Kid. My rascal of a nephew, here, stole the frock from my chest.

Mrs. B. How did *you* come by it?

Kid. I took it off the child with my own hands.

Mrs. B. You?

Kid. Do you recollect your husband, when he was in trade, prosecuting a woman for passing a bad sovereign? That woman was my wife — it was the death of her. Out of revenge I kidnapped your child, and brought her up as my own. When you came to Weymouth, I used to row you out in my boat. You happened to say you should like to adopt a child, and you took (not knowing it) your own daughter. There she stands!

All. Marian!

Kid. She had a mole on her left arm, which I hid by burning.

Mrs. B. I took her because she resembled my lost child. I feel your tale is true. My Lucinda, come to your mother's arms!

Yearner (*who has been asleep on the sofa, wakes up at the last words*). You *her* mother! She shall be my lamb, — I'll marry her!

Kid. Why, that's the scamp that bolted from Weymouth with the cash-box of the "Benevolent Buffers' Society."

All. Rascal!

Yearner. Yea, the multitude is on me! I will hold forth. My discourse I shall divide into seventeen heads —

Arling. Silence, or I'll break *your* head, as sure as my name is Arthur Arlington!

Kid. Any relation to old Stephen Arlington, of Stoke?

Arling. His grand-nephew, — but unacknowledged because poor.

Kid. Well, he died yesterday morning, and they say he's left you Stoke Manor, and five hundred a year.

Arling. Then if so, may I hope that Mrs. Breston will countenance my suit to her lovely daughter?

Mrs. B. If my child loves you she shall not be opposed.

Yearner (*behind, on sofa, aside*). I shall marry the old woman!

Sarah (*sobbing*). Missus, don't send me to the treadmill for imposing on you; I won't do it again.

Bob. What, is *your* conscience a-working now? Mine has left off, and shut up shop.

Mrs. B. My delight is so great that I can forgive anything.

Arling. And if my fortune proves real, I'll present you with a hundred pounds.

Sarah. Oh, thank you! And won't *you* forgive me, Bob, for having made a breach in our love?

Bob. Never. First you set my conscience a-working, and then you cast me off for another. There's a pair of breaches between us that can never be repaired.

Arling. But when I tell you that she only *pretended* to accept this slimy hypocrite to do us a service —

Bob. Didn't she? Then, Sarah Ann, come to my arms. I think, after that, she ought to be brought out in the "Lives of Remarkable Women," in penny parts.

Kid. I've been an out and out rascal, I have. But I took care of the girl while I had her, and I've done the best now to ease my conscience.

Bob. Do forgive him! He's a noble old villain, after all!

Sarah. Ah, we've all been full of faults; but we generally get forgiveness from our friends here, for if they refuse to give us a good character —

Yearner (*waking up c.*). What is to become of us all?

YEARNER.

MRS. B. MARIAN. ARLING.

SARAH. BOB. KIDMAN.

R.

CURTAIN.

L.

JOHN WOPPS;

OR,

FROM INFORMATION I RECEIVED.

A Farce,

IN ONE ACT.

BY W. E. SUTER.

JOHN WOPPS.

CHARACTERS.

SURREY, LONDON,
1860.

SAM SNUG, <i>Independent</i>	Mr. Brindsley.
CHOPS, <i>a Journeyman Butcher</i>	Mr. Tapping.
JOHN WOPPS, <i>A Policeman, 'A 1.'</i>	Mr. C. Rice.
TOM CHAFFER, <i>Ditto, 'A 2.'</i>	Mr. Wright.
MRS. WOPPS.	Miss Bellair.
MRS. CHOPS.	Mrs. Atkins.

COSTUMES.

SNUG — Broad-brimmed white hat, full-skirted coat, trousers and leather leggings.

CHOPS — Breeches, butcher's trock, apron, and steel.

WOPPS — Policeman's dress.

CHAFFER — Ditto, with great coat, &c.

MRS. WOPPS — Neat cotton dress.

MRS. CHOPS — Ditto.

JOHN WOPPS;

OR,

FROM INFORMATION I RECEIVED.

SCENE. — *A plain chamber, plainly furnished. Door, R. C. A large cupboard, or closet, showing, when open, shelves all around it, on which are ranged cups and saucers, tea-pot, plates, dishes, &c., L. C.; L. U. E., a window; door, R. 2 E.; door, L. 2 E.*

Enter MRS. WOPPS, C. D., carrying a large pie.

Mrs. W. O, dear! — (*Placing pie on table.*) — This pie is very hot and very heavy; but, I am proud to say, the crust is very light. I should think John would be pleased with this for his supper. Really there is no knowing what to get for him. I wonder whether all policemen are as dainty as he is when he comes off his beat.

Enter MRS. CHOPS, R. D.

Mrs. C. Excuse my coming this way, Mrs. Wopps; but that back staircase is so convenient.

Mrs. W. (*Shortly.*) — And what may you please to want, mum?

Mrs. C. I want my husband.

Mrs. W. And why should you expect to find him here, mum?

Mrs. C. He said he had a message to leave for Mr. Wopps; and so I thought —

Mrs. W. I don't believe you.

Mrs. C. What did you say, mum?

Mrs. W. You are always intruding into my room with some excuse or other, and it's my opinion that you come after *my* husband.

Mrs. C. (*Laughing.*) — O, you silly woman!

Mrs. W. I don't forget that he courted you before he fell in love with me.

Mrs. C. Nonsense — we were never sweethearts — but we were neighbors, and once or twice he took me to the tea-gardens, and paid for tea and shrimps.

Mrs. W. (Spitefully.) — Yes, I know he did.

Mrs. C. And I gave him up entirely as soon as I became acquainted with Chops.

Mrs. W. Gave *him* up! You mean that he wished you good morning as soon as he was introduced to me.

Mrs. C. Yes, that was it, if it will make you more contented.

Mrs. W. I cannot but be aware that my husband is a superior man.

Mrs. C. (Sneeringly.) — He is a policeman.

Mrs. W. And his uniform renders him very fascinating — he couldn't look more noble if he was an inspector.

Mrs. C. At all events, Mrs. Wopps, I beg I may hear no more of your ridiculous suspicions and insinuations — they are insulting to me, for I am a respectable married woman.

Mrs. W. (Sneeringly.) — Yes, your husband is a journeyman butcher.

Mrs. C. (Sharply.) — He will be a master before your husband is a serjeant.

Mrs. W. Why did you take a lodging in this house?

Mrs. C. I did not know that you were living here — and even if I had, should not have hesitated.

Mrs. W. No, of course you wouldn't.

Mrs. C. O, Mrs. Wopps, I am ashamed of you.

Mrs. W. Your husband, mum, shares my suspicions.

Mrs. C. And your husband is jealous of you — jealous of everybody that even looks at you, and suffers, as he declares, a martyrdom all the while he is on his beat.

Mrs. W. There is no true love without a little jealousy — but in his heart, my Wopps knows that I am devoted to him, as he is to me.

Mrs. C. Ah!

Mrs. W. And now, excuse me, I must put my pie away. —
(Places pie on shelf in cupboard.)

Mrs. C. For Mr. Wopps's supper, I presume?

Mrs. W. (Closing cupboard door.) — Yes, mum, it is, since you must know; his appetite is very delicate lately, and I thought this little delicacy might tempt him — my thoughts, mum, are all centred in my own husband, and nobody else's.

Mrs. C. O, I don't think he'll return very hungry this evening!

Mrs. W. Why should you think so, pray?

Mrs. C. Because, a while ago, I saw him glide down the steps of an area, and into the kitchen.

Mrs. W. Well, mum, and what of that? — he had a case there, I dare say.

Mrs. C. O, yes, it was a case; no doubt about it. But I have my ironing to do; so I hope you will have the goodness to excuse

me. — (*Aside.*) — I have given her a turn; and really, a little bit of revenge is not at all unpleasant. [*Exit, R. door.*]

Mrs. W. (*Sinking into chair.*) — Down an area! I have heard that policemen do sometimes go down areas; but my John wouldn't — no; he looks higher than that. If I really thought he could descend so low —

Snug. (*Putting his head in c. door.*) — Is Mrs. Wopps at home?

Mrs. W. Yes, she is. What may you please to want?

Snug. (*Running forward.*) — I want you. — (*About to embrace her; she rises and retreats.*) — My blessed Betsy, give me a kiss.

Mrs. W. If you don't keep off, sir, I'll scream fire!

Snug. I knew you would give me a warm reception.

Mrs. W. Why, gracious! — O, dear! — if he wasn't in Australia, I should say you were my brother Sam.

Snug. He was there, but he isn't — for here he is.

Mrs. W. O, my dear Sam!

Snug. My blessed Betsy! — (*They embrace.*) — I knew you would be glad to see me.

Mrs. W. Glad! — (*Crying, and wiping her eyes.*) — Never was so happy in all my life.

Snug. (*Laughing.*) — What rum chaps women are! — happen what will, they are sure to cry; miserable or jolly, they can't settle down without a good shower of tears. Cry away, my blessed Betsy, for I suppose it does you good.

Mrs. W. And so, my dear Sam, you have really come at last?

Snug. Yes; and what's more, I haven't come home with empty pockets. Had good luck at the diggins — had to wait a precious long time for it, though — at last my mates and I lighted on a nugget, something worth talking about; and now, as far as money can do it, I am a gentleman for life.

Mrs. W. O, I am so glad.

Snug. And so you ought to be, Betsy, for I'll make a lady of you, and your husband, too; but where is he?

Mrs. W. John —

Snug. Wopps, yes.

Mrs. W. He won't be home for two hours yet; he's on duty.

Snug. Ah, exactly; you wrote to me that he was a peeler.

Mrs. W. Don't never let him hear you say peeler — it would hurt his feelings: he is so very susceptible — comes of highly respectable parents — was brought up to no sort of employment — in fact, he was a gentleman till he married me; and then, as I had a little bit of money, and he was anxious for a genteel occupation, we took an establishment in the general line.

Snug. And how did it answer?

Mrs. W. Well, we had a beautiful shop, and should have done a good trade if we had had any custom; but we hadn't, except people that never paid, and we got tired of that.

Snug. And retired.

Mrs. W. It was a shop — we sold everything — that is — I mean, we had everything to sell, from the finest butter and eggs down to very superior hearthstone.

Snug. And nobody had any taste?

Mrs. W. No; so we staid till we had spent all our money, and eaten all our stock.

Snug. The superior hearthstone included.

Mrs. W. And then Wopps entered the force.

Snug. The force? — O, ah, turned peeler.

Mrs. W. Don't be so vulgar, Sam — pray don't.

Snug. Never mind, Betsy, your troubles are all over now. I never had a brother, consequently you are my only sister, and, as I said before, I'll make a man of Wopps, and you, too.

Mrs. W. (*Throws her arms round his neck.*) — My dear Sam.

Enter CHOPS, R. door, and starts.

Chops. Hem, hem! excuse me, of course, Mrs. Wopps, I didn't know you was engaged, or —

Mrs. W. What is it, Mr. Chops?

Chops. Have you seen my Sarah?

Mrs. W. She was here just now.

Chops. Ah! thought, I suppose, that Wopps was off duty; nice goings on in this house altogether. I'm disappointed in you, Mrs. Wopps: I thought you was a different sort of person; I did.

Snug. What does he mean?

Mrs. W. I don't understand you, Mr. Chops?

Chops. When I thinks that while Wopps is majestically a-walk-ing back'ards and for'ards on his beat, you are — ha, ha, ha! — it delights me that he's a victim. He's cut up my carcass pretty often, and I shall be proud to see him on the hook. I wish you good after-noon, Mrs. Wopps. [*Exit, R. door.*]

Mrs. W. O, dear! now I see — he doesn't know — he -- I shall be the talk of all Clare-market.

Snug. Come along, Betsy; we'll soon enlighten him; and then how sheepish he'll look! — here, you Chops. — (*Goes off, R. door, dragging MRS. WOPPS with him; JOHN WOPPS darts on, C. door; stops suddenly, and looks around, then slowly advances.*)

Wopps. From information I received — (*a thought appears to strike him; he bolts to cupboard; opens door, and looks in; peeps under the table, &c.; then comes forward despairingly.*) — Yes, it's true — she's gone. O, Betsy — O, Elizabuff — eh; but stop! we have another apartment — our connubial chamber. — (*Darts up, and throws open L. door; then stoops and peers — no — no — coming forward.*) — The prisoner has escaped — she has slipped off the matrimonial handcuffs — has filed away the fetters of love — and has bolted — government shan't offer a reward for her apprehension — I won't allow it — what reward have I got for all my affection? O, Betsy, Betsy! — (*Sinks into chair.*)

Enter TOM CHAFFER, C. door.

Chaf. (Aside.) — There he is — what a green un! — one can gammon him to anything. — (*Aloud.*) — Wopps! — (*He jumps up.*)

Wopps. Yes! that's my name — but you have stung me worse than any waps that ever was.

Chaf. Come back to your beat, or you'll be found out.

Wopps. No, I shall be found at home, for here I mean to stay.

Chaf. (Aside, laughing.) — Well, he is green — (*Aloud.*) — When I came up to you, you were quietly slipping down some area steps.

Wopps. Yes, I know — at No. 6 Grub Street. — (*Aside.*) — The cook had kindly informed me that she had a considerable portion of a cold fowl very much at my service.

Chaf. What were you up to down there, eh?

Wopps. A boy had just thrown a marble down the area, and I was going to see if he'd broke a window.

Chaf. Ah, ah! then I told you — (*sniggering aside*) — that a man had just called upon your wife, after making sure that you were not at home.

Wopps. O!

Chaf. And that I had every reason to believe they were about to elope together.

Wopps. And then I rushed from you in a state of delirium.

Chaf. At the very moment that an old woman was knocked down by a wheelbarrow under your very nose.

Wopps. I know it — and she shouted "Police" — everybody shouted "Police" — and the result will be, that once more will be heard the libellous remark, that a policeman is never in the way when he's wanted.

Chaf. Have you noticed anything strange in your wife's manner lately?

Wopps. Yes — she was always queer when I came home without any appetite — unjust female — how should a man be hungry with so many generous cooks residing on his beat?

Chaf. And now she has gone and left you — bolted with some other scamp.

Wopps. Other scamp — be particular about your grammar, will you? But, of course, Tom, it's all true — you wouldn't deceive me.

Chaf. Now, is it likely?

Wopps. Certainly not — you are one of us — and a policeman is the soul of honor.

Chaf. Of course he is.

Wopps. Tom, the man that could ever doubt a policeman's evidence would be base enough to set the Thames on fire, if by human means that daring act could be accomplished.

Chaf. Well, now, take my advice — come back to your beat. Recollect that public duty —

Wopps. Pooh — I'm on domestic duty — that, Tom, is para-

mount — and she knows — she knows, Tom, that I never neglected it — and yet, now, she — O, treacherous Betsy — atrocious Elizabeth.

Chaf. (Aside.) — Well, now, this is what I do call a lark. — (*Goes off, laughing, c. door.*)

Wopps. Cruel female — you have broken my heart, and deprived me of the cold fowl I was about to masticate, and now I feel a void — an emptiness all around and about me — of course it's grief — it can't be because I am hungry — I wonder whether there is anything in the cupboard. — (*Goes into cupboard.*) — What's this? — (*Brings out pie, and places it on table, shaking his fingers.*) — Phew — it's hot — this pie is a small token of her remorse in running away from me — proves that she is not all base, since she has left me this to sustain me in my sorrow. — (*Breaking out.*) — But who is the villain that has taken her from me? — (*Drawing his truncheon.*) — Will nobody give him into custody? — Let me see the ruffian — I'll demolish him! — (*Brings his truncheon down on the pie, and smashes in the crust.*) — What's this? — (*Pulling out a head.*) — Curse me if it isn't a rabbit pie — this wounds my feelings worse than all — she knows that I was once suspected of unfair dealings with a pie of this nature — awful reprobate — not only to run away from me, but at the moment of her departure to prepare this insult to my misery. Hark, I hear somebody coming up stairs; it's my serjeant, no doubt, who has missed me off my beat. I must hide, and I must put this out of the way; for if he should see this rabbit pie, he'll be certain that I am not far off. — (*Goes into cupboard with pie.*) — O, it is so hot I can't hold it! — (*Hastily places pie on floor in cupboard.*) — To be shut up alone with a rabbit pie! What an awful situation for a respectable policeman! — (*Closes cupboard door, shutting himself in.*)

Enter MRS. WOPPS and SAM SNUG, R. door.

Mrs. W. Dear, dear, how unfortunate!

Snug. Wonder how we missed him. — (*JOHN WOPPS looks from cupboard, and starts.*) — Don't take on so. What need you mind what anybody says?

Wopps. (Aside.) — There's a ruffian.

Snug. I have arranged all my plans, Betsy.

Wopps. (Aside.) — Calls her Betsy; then the evidence is complete, and I am fully committed for a heavy trial. — (*Staggering back into cupboard, closing door.*)

Snug. We'll live in the country, Betsy; in a large house, up steps, and a dog-kennel in the passage, and a coach-house at the bottom of the garden, and we'll keep some pigs in the back kitchen, and everything besides that's genteel and fashionable; and I say, Betsy, shan't we astonish Wopps? — (*WOPPS groans in cupboard.*)

Mrs. W. Good gracious! what's that?

Snug. You ought to know best. — I am quite a stranger here.

Mrs. W. But if Wopps should first be told that I — (*WOPPS groans again; both start.*) — O, whatever is it?

Snug. Do you keep a cat?

Mrs. W. Yes; but —

Snug. Well, never mind — come along, Betsy. — (*Putting his arm round her waist. WOPPS puts his head from cupboard, and hastily draws it back again.*) — Don't fret any more, but give me a kiss, Betsy dear, and come along with me. — (*Kisses her with a loud smack. WOPPS groans again, and a rattling is heard amongst some of the crockery; both start.*)

Mrs. W. I don't believe that was the cat.

Snug. Then there's a ghost on the premises — and your husband can take him in charge, considering he's a peeler.

Mrs. W. Now don't say peeler! — there's a dear — pray don't. — (*They go off, c. d.*)

MRS. CHOPS enters, R. D.

Mrs. C. Mrs. Wopps, would you be good enough to — why, she isn't here. Where has she gone to, I wonder? — (*WOPPS groans. MRS. CHOPS starting.*) — Mercy on me, what's that? — (*A blow is heard at cupboard door; it flies open, and WOPPS is seen sitting on the floor, and feebly nodding his head, and shaking his truncheon.*) — Gracious, Mr. Wopps, why are you there?

Wopps. From information I received —

Mrs. C. (*Laughing.*) — I understand. Somebody told you there was a pie in the cupboard.

Wopps. (*Writhing.*) — Rabbit — rabbit —

Mrs. C. Rabbit what?

Wopps. It was a rabbit pie, mum.

Mrs. C. Was! You don't mean to say that you have eaten it all?

Wopps. (*Indignantly.*) — Ate it — no — I'm a sitting in it.

Mrs. C. What!

Wopps. Yes, mum; and if I was called on to give evidence, I should swear that it hasn't been long from the baker's. — (*He rises.*) — See, mum — (*pointing to floor*) — there is the debris, as the newspapers say. Perhaps you'll be good enough to tell me if the gravy has soiled my uniform? — (*He turns, and pieces of pie-crust, part of the dish, &c., are seen clinging to his coat, and sticking out of his pockets.*)

Mrs. C. But what does all this mean?

Wopps. (*Breaking out.*) — It means that my wife is false — that she has sloped — gone off with a vagabond, not half so good-looking as I am.

Mrs. C. It isn't possible.

Wopps. Not possible! I tell you there's no comparison between us — he's ugly, mum — ugly.

Mrs. C. Not possible, I mean, that your wife has run away.

Wopps. If I said run away, I improperly expressed myself—I should have said walked off. Yes, mum, walked off, walked off with a fellow that called me a peeler.

Mrs. C. Good heavens!

Wopps. O, it's a safe conviction—and I have no reason to ask for a remand to complete the case. They made love here, before my face, while I was behind their back. I saw him with his arm round her waist, and I heard him kiss her.

Mrs. C. And you didn't knock him down?

Wopps. I didn't; for I felt so weak, and he looked so powerful. It wasn't for want of courage—ask the boys on my beat—they fly before me. When I see five or six of them together, up to their larks, I rush in amongst them—I hit the biggest on the nose with my truncheon, and, as a warning and example, I seize the littlest by the hair of his head, and lug him off to the station, regardless of consequences.

Mrs. C. But with respect to your wife?

Wopps. I don't respect her at all—how should I? Hasn't she escaped from my custody?—Wasn't I a witness?—Didn't I hear her say “My dear” to the ruffian who called me by the ignominious name of “peeler?” O, Mrs. Chops, I think I could have borne all but that—that “peeler” was the last straw, and it broke my back. O, then it was that, overpowered, annihilated, I subsided into the rabbit pie.

Mrs. C. I don't believe one word of all you have been talking about. I know by my husband's ridiculous jealousy that—

Wopps. He ought to be ashamed of himself. Whatever opinion he may have formed of you, he knows that I am a moral man.

Mrs. C. Well, I am sure, Mr. Wopps.

Wopps. Don't mind me—I don't know what I am talking about. My wife has run away, and my head isn't as it ought to be. O, Mrs. Chops, I should have made you Mrs. Wopps.

Mrs. C. I should have declined the honor.

Wopps. No, you wouldn't—how could you after the several teas and shrimps that I so liberally paid for on your account—you were very expensive, Mrs. Chops—of course you remember the many glasses of rum and water—

Mrs. C. Which you drank.

Wopps. Did I?—I don't know—my head, as I said before.—*(Breaking out.)*—Which is the way to Bedlam?—Mrs. C., call a cab—put the fare in my pocket, and give orders that if they can't cure me, I am to be smothered.

Mrs. C. Pray do not make a fool of yourself.

Wopps. Consoling angel—your sympathy is a comfort to my suffering bosom—bless you, Mrs. Chops, bless you!

Mrs. C. *(Getting away.)*—Mr. Wopps, what are you about?

Wopps. Excuse me; I don't know—it's my head, as I said before. My wife has left me—and now—other days—the tea—and the shrimps—they are rising—

Mrs. C. Mr. Wopps!

Wopps. To my memory. Again I am beside you in the tea-gardens — again I see the glass of rum and water before me — would that I could seem again to drink it — again I attempt to kiss you! — (*Tries to kiss her.*)

Mrs. C. (*Slapping his face.*) — How dare you!

Wopps. And again you slap my face. Excuse me, I don't know — it's my head, as I said before. Again my ardor — and the rum and water — render me desperate! — (*She is hurrying away; he pursues, and brings her back.*) — Again you attempt to fly, leaving me to pay the waiter!

Mrs. C. Let me go, sir, or ——

Wopps. Again I seize, and frantically embrace you! — (*Embracing her.*) — And again ——

Enter CHOPS, suddenly, R. door.

Chops. Knuckles of veal and ribs of beef — here's a go!

Wopps. What business have you here intruding on my misery?

Chops. What business have you to be cuddling my Sarah?

Wopps. Did I cuddle you, Sarah? — perhaps I did — I don't know — my head, as I said before ——

Mrs. C. Chops, don't make yourself ridiculous! — I merely came to borrow a flat-iron, and he ——

Chops. Rubbish! I'll score him like a *line* of pork — I'll chop his bones — I'll ——

Wopps. Now you see, mum, through that cursed flat-iron, I shall be horribly mangled.

Enter MRS. WOPPS, C. door.

Mrs. W. O, you have come home! — (*Running to him.*) — O, John — my dear John!

Wopps. (*Starting back.*) — Betsy, Betsy! don't approach me. From information I received ——

Mrs. W. O, I have such news for you!

Wopps. No, you haven't — it's no news. Horrible female, go — you are discharged — and I wish I could say that you leave the court without a stain upon your character.

Mrs. W. (*To CHOPS.*) — I understand you have told him what you saw.

Wopps. No, I'm my own witness; go, leave me, or I — I don't know what I may do — I'm a maniac.

Mrs. W. (*Laughing.*) — O, you ninny! Why?

Chops. Ah, you are a nice pair — well matched — for just now I caught Wopps a cuddling my Sarah.

Mrs. W. (*Starting.*) — What!

Mrs. C. Mrs. Wopps, I assure you ——

Mrs. W. You did, villain, you did!

Wopps. I really don't know — for my head, as I said before.

Mrs. W. O, you wretch — I'll leave you directly!

Wopps. Leave me — you have left me — so, suppose I did cud-dle Mrs. Chops, what right have you to interfere?

Mrs. W. Well, if ever —

Chops. (*Seizing WOPPS.*) — Perhaps I have no right to interfere, eh? — (*Shaking him.*) — Haven't I — eh?

Wopps. Chops, you shall be sorry for this — I'll swear you tried to murder me. The magistrate always believes a policeman's evidence.

Mrs. C. Chops — Mrs. Wopps — I assure you —

Chops. Rascal —

Mrs. W. (*Seizing WOPPS.*) — Ruffian! — (*They shake him.*)

Snug. (*Entering, C. D.*) — Halloo, halloo, Betsy — what's the matter now?

Wopps. (*Breaking away.*) — O, that's him — vile destroyer of my domestic felicity — look at me — I'm a maniac.

Snug. I see you are. Betsy, is this Wopps?

Mrs. W. Yes, and he's been a-kissing this young woman.

Chops. A cuddling my Sarah.

Mrs. C. (*Crying.*) — O, this is too much!

Wopps. You're right, it is. It's harder to swallow than the rabbit pie. I thought I was the prosecutor in this case; but it seems, after all, that I'm the prisoner at the bar.

Snug. Wopps, I shan't allow these goings on.

Wopps. Ruffian — you've got your object; and if I think proper to cuddle every girl in the parish, what's the odds to you?

Mrs. W. (*Screaming.*) — O, the wretch!

Snug. (*Seizing WOPPS, and shaking him.*) — It's my duty to wring your neck.

Wopps. Not when I'm on duty — you mustn't — let me go. — (*Breaking away.*) — When was there a law passed to authorize everybody to shake a policeman?

Mrs. C. It serves you right, Mr. Wopps.

Wopps. Go on.

Chops. You are a scoundrel.

Wopps. Proceed.

Mrs. W. A deceitful vagabond.

Wopps. Thank you. — (*Turning to SNUG.*) — It's you next, I believe.

Snug. And an infernal peeler.

Wopps. (*Starting violently.*) — Eh! that's a settler — no man's reason would stand against it; consequently, I'm a maniac. I've been injured and tortured by you all — goaded by the butcher like a refractory bullock, till my head, as I said before — (*flourishing his truncheon*) — I'm a maniac; if I kill anybody, you mustn't prosecute. I'm determined to commit slaughter, and, to begin, I'll smash —

Omnes. (*Retreating a step.*) — Eh —

Wopps. The crockery! — (*Darts into cupboard, and hammers away at the crockery with his truncheon; the women scream;*

MRS. WOPPS runs up, closes cupboard door upon WOPPS, and bolts it; the smashing of crockery continues; women scream again; MRS. CHOPS falls into SNUG's arms; CHOPS hastens and drags her away; MRS. WOPPS falls into CHOP's arms; MRS. CHOPS pulls her away; MRS. CHOPS then falls into her husband's arms; MRS. WOPPS into those of SNUG; WOPPS, who has been hammering away at cupboard door with his truncheon, now breaks a hole in a panel, and puts his head through, staring at his wife as she lies in SNUG's arms; MRS. WOPPS looks up, sees her husband's head, screams, and runs and unbolts the door; the door then swings forward, bringing WOPPS with it, his head remaining in the same position.)

Mrs. W. Pull your head out.

Wopps. (*Struggling.*) — I can't.

Mrs. W. You'll be choked.

Wopps. I am. — (*The two women tug at the tail of his coat; the two men drive at his head; he is at last liberated, and falls to the ground; CHOPS and SNUG raise and carry him forward.*)

Mrs. W. O, he is in a swoon. — (*Kneeling beside him.*) — John — Wopps — John — speak to your own Betsy.

Wopps. — (*Seated on ground, and with a vacant stare.*) — From information I received — (*Seeing SNUG.*) — Ah, there he is — there he is!

Mrs. W. Yes, thank goodness, there he is!

Wopps. (*Groaning.*) — O!

Mrs. W. Why, you gaby, this is my brother — just come back from Australia.

Wopps. (*Jumping up.*) — What!

Chops. }
Mrs. C. } Your brother!

Snug. Sam Snug — Betsy's big brother — at your service.

Wopps. Your brother! Then from information I received, I have every reason to believe that I have made a d—d fool of myself.

Snug. I should like to see the man that would contradict you.

Mrs. W. And he has brought home such a lot of money!

Wopps. Then he's welcome.

Snug. You and Betsy shall share my fortune with me.

Wopps. Noble individual; you are an honor to your sex!

Mrs. W. O, but I forgot; did you cuddle Mrs. Chops?

Wopps. I don't know — my head, as I said before —

Mrs. C. He really did not know what he was doing. And I beg I may be bothered no more about it.

Snug. You won't; for we shall retire into the country — a large mansion, with a coach-house, and a pig-sty.

Chops. Then I'll never be jealous no more, Sarah.

Wopps. And now I shall retire into private life, and live happy ever after, with my Betsy's love and my brother-in law's money — and cheered by the proud consciousness that, as a member of the

Force, I was always at my post. There was one on my beat I used to lean against. And I hope you will allow me to say, that I have won the entire approbation of a great number of highly respectable inhabitants — of course, I shall name no parties, but only say, as usual, that — from information I received.

CURTAIN.

TWO HEADS

ARE BETTER THAN ONE

A Farce,

IN ONE ACT.

BY

LENOX HORNE, Esq.

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MR. STRANGE, *a painter.*
MR. MAXWELTON.
SAMMY MAXWELTON, *his son.*
CHARLES CONQUEST.
ELLEN, *Strange's niece.*

TIME OF REPRESENTATION — Forty minutes.

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE.

SCENE. — *A furnished apartment. Two windows at the back; doors, L. U. E., R. 1 E., and R. U. E.; a number of pictures, copies of the old masters, hung about the room, with various pieces of armor, and pictures without frames standing against the walls; busts of Shakespeare and Milton on brackets or pedestals; at L. C. is a table, a round hole being cut in it, just sufficient to admit the head of a man; a cover on it, reaching to the ground, with a slit in it exactly where the aperture is (fastened at each corner to prevent it slipping off — the table must not be too large or heavy, and must have large castors on the legs, so as to move with facility). Upon the table are various articles of dress-making; a pasteboard head called a dolly, the size of life, with a lady's lace cap on it, standing on one side of the table, on the left of which is a small sofa, while on the right, at some distance from the table, is a large easy-chair.*

As the curtain rises ELLEN is seen seated at the table working at the cap on the false head, while STRANGE, with a pipkin in his hand, is employed sponging an old picture, resting R. on an easel.

Strange. Yes, yes, it's coming out beautifully! This is a lucky purchase! I can almost swear to its being an original Claude. What a fine brown autumnal tint is underneath the old varnish! It is really worth your while, Ellen, to leave that silly work for a moment and come and see how fast I am bringing it out.

Ellen. Ah, so you said, uncle, of the last picture you restored, when you rubbed right through the old rotten canvas to the mahogany table, and took it for a beautiful bright brown foliage.

Strange. Yes, yes, I admit that I entered a little too deep into the old varnish there. I used a choice receipt of the National Gallery with a little more force perhaps than discretion. However, the main fault really lay in my attempting such delicate handling just as my illness was coming on, and I am not strong enough yet, I find, to stand long over the work, much as it delights me.

Ellen. (*aside*) I must try and get him away, as I am sure poor Charles has been waiting a long time. (*aloud*) Then had you not better try and take a nap and rest yourself, for fear of another accident of the like nature?

Strange. Well, I do feel fatigued, and a short nap will do me good; (*looking at the picture with admiration, blowing something off it*) I would not have it injured for a thousand pounds, for it will make a marvellous companion to that greatest of all landscape painters, my beloved Turner. (*Exit, D. R. 1 E.*)

Ellen. (*rising*) I must make haste and give the signal before my uncle returns. (*opens one of the windows*) Yes, there he is, wiping his forehead in the burning sun. Poor dear Charles—no matter what weather, rain, wind, or sunshine, he is always watching at his post. (*waving her handkerchief*) I have left the street door ajar, so that he may enter without being observed. (*comes forward*) What a life of fear this is! How cruel that all the clever, handsome, and best-hearted young men, are destined to be poor and unfortunate! I know my uncle will never listen to Charles's offer for my hand until his circumstances are improved, for he is always saying that he hates poverty in every shape and way, as it sours the matrimonial temper, when people, to get on nowadays in the world, must appear to be richer than their incomes will in any way permit.

Enter CHARLES, door, L. U. E.

Charles. Ah, Ellen, I thought you would never give the signal. (*takes off his hat and places it on table, and wipes his forehead*) Love making, this weather, is decidedly hot work—I'm baked on all sides, like a brick.

Ellen. (*making a sign, pointing to the door, where her uncle entered, whispering*) Hush! no one saw you enter?

Charles. No, no one, dear Ellen. (*kisses her hand*) Luckily your uncle's window looks out at the back instead of the front. He still keeps to his bedroom, does he not?

Ellen. No, he has been down for a short time this morning, and may be back shortly, so you must not stay long. He will soon be well enough now to take his daily walk, hunting as usual after old pictures.

Charles. I'm glad to hear it, with all my heart; then we shall have our liberty as usual to converse freely together, without dread of interruption. How fortunate, dear Ellen, the thought came into your clever little head, of making this paste-board beauty (*takes up the false head from the table*) the means of our meeting so often, and precluding all fear of discovery.

Ellen. Yes, that, and his being so extremely short-sighted.

Charles. (*smiling*) You may say that. Why, the last time he treated you to the theatre, I was watching you, although I dare not show myself, and in the confusion of coming out, I saw him run his head slap against the nose of a large coach

horse, and then take off his hat and bow politely, apologizing to the animal, without ever being aware of his mistake.

Ellen. I remember — but let us, Charles, talk of something more important than my uncle's infirmities. Tell me — you saw your lawyer yesterday — what's he say? what hope is there?

Charles. (*joyfully*) Every hope, dear Ellen. The case will be positively decided to-morrow or the day after. My cousin has little or no chance, and my uncle's property, as he intended, must all come to me. Your uncle, then, will no longer upbraid me with my poverty, or refuse me for a relation.

Ellen. But let us suppose for a moment that it is not decided in your favor, what becomes of our being united then?

Charles. Oh, don't alarm yourself, my lawyer is a first-rate hand; he'd ensnare old Nick himself, if he had to deal with him on parchment; but even let the worst come to the worst, I shall not be long, I am persuaded, before I shall find some means of livelihood, and if you really love me, you will not then refuse to be mine, although my income may not quite come up to your uncle's mercenary views in the choice of a husband.

Ellen. Hark! (*listening at the door, R. 1 E.*) Yes, I hear him coming — quick, Charles, to your hiding-place — I don't expect he will stay long.

Charles. I hope he won't I'm sure. (*takes from the table a green tippet, which is made to fall over his shoulders, and ties it round his neck; at the same time he places a close cap on his head, the color of the false one, to hide his hair; then gets quickly under the table, and thrusts his head up through the centre*)

Ellen. Here — you have forgotten your hat. (*puts it under the table, takes the cap from the false head and places it on CHARLES'S, arranging it to look as like as possible.*) Oh! you must take care of this too. (*slips the false head under the table*) Now, be prudent. (*looking to see if her uncle is coming*)

Charles. I say, Ellen.

Ellen. (*whispering*) Don't speak a word.

Charles. Put your head close to mine, I must tell you something.

Ellen. (*putting her face near him*) Well, make haste.

Charles. (*kissing her*) That's all, dear.

Ellen. Oh, for shame, sir. (*seats herself R. of the table, taking up a long piece of lace fastened to the cap upon his head, and begins working with her needle upon it*)

Enter STRANGE, door R. 1 E.

Strange. It's no use, I can't sleep; my brain is still working. If my hands are not, upon that picture. (*seats himself in the easy-chair*) I shall be strong enough I hope to-morrow to take a walk; air and exercise will soon restore me. (*taking snuff*)

Ellen. Poor uncle, you have had a sad time of it. (*aside to CHARLES*) That's good news for us.

Charles. It is, indeed, for this squatting down here like a toad in a hole, is anything but pleasant.

Strange. (*looking at her*) Why, what a mania you have taken lately for working caps; I never see you now but you are occupied before that stupid, ugly head.

Charles. (*aside*) Ugly! Hang it, Ellen, I'm not so plain as all that.

Ellen. (*aside, making a sign*) Silence!

Strange. Everybody would suppose that you were a milliner by profession, if they did not know to the contrary.

Ellen. I admit, uncle, that I have a taste this way, and I am never so happy as when occupied with it. (*arranges cap -- CHARLES kisses her hand*)

Strange. But what's the use of it? I observe the goggle-eyes of that pasteboard effigy, always staring at you, and you always at work upon it, and yet you have nothing to show for it.

Ellen. How can you say so, uncle? I made my last new bonnet on it, and I am now finishing this cap for our old friend Mrs. Wigsby, next door; besides, we all have our fancies more or less. Some girls sit all day at crochet, others at Berlin wool; you yourself, at one time, were occupied morning, noon, and night scrubbing up old pictures, until Mr. Snap, the dealer, sold you the original portrait of Shakespeare.

Strange. (*aside*) Yes, a swindling scoundrel. It turned out to be the head of an old bald-pated officer instead of Shakespeare, for I discovered his epaulettes underneath a thick coat of paint, clever as it was put on; but I don't quite see the connection between my portrait of Shakespeare, and your trumpery on that stupid block there. (*CHARLES, indignant, opens his mouth to speak, when ELLEN immediately claps her hand over it, and stops him*) But I wish to talk to you now, Ellen, on matters more important; this last illness of mine has made me reflect seriously of what is to become of you in the event of my death; you know nearly the whole of my property dies with me, and it is therefore advisable for you to settle in life.

Ellen. How mean you, dear uncle?

Strange. Why, I must think of getting you a husband.

Charles. (*taken by surprise, exclaims aloud*) Oh!

Strange. (*turning round rapidly*) What's the matter? (*getting up*)

Ellen. Nothing, nothing. I ran the needle up my nail, that's all. (*aside to CHARLES*) Are you mad? (*aloud*) My dear uncle, pray do not talk so, — I hope you will yet live for many years, — I do not wish to leave you, and am quite contented to remain as I am.

Strange. (*sitting down again*) Don't talk such nonsense,

Ellen. I must not forget my duty; and that is, to see you well

established in life. I presume you are not different to the rest of your sex; you do not object to the married state.

Ellen. No; but I had rather not be sacrificed for money, and made to marry a man I could not love. Why refuse Mr. Charles Conquest? He is well educated, — of a good family, — has no vice, and never frequents those horrid places called coal holes, dust holes, and cider cellars, and Cremorne, and the Eagle in the Shades, and the Grecian in the Bower.

Charles. (*aside*) Bravo, Ellen.

Strange. Stuff and nonsense. What are you talking about?

Ellen. Then he expects to come into a very good property shortly.

Strange. Yes, at doomsday. Listen, the bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, — he's not worth a rap, (*takes out his snuff-box*) not a pinch of snuff — and never will be; I know him, — he is one of those clever young fellows who has bothered his head with so much, that he don't know how to apply his cleverness to any useful purpose.

Charles. (*aside*) What a brutal old critic. (*ELLEN makes a sign for him to be quiet*)

Strange. (*rising up satirically*) To a young girl love is a very fine thing no doubt, very; but there never yet was found a receipt to teach you how to live entirely upon it; you talk of birth and education, and I'll throw you in intellect and genius as a makeweight. Why, the gentleman in possession of this mine of intellectual wealth has only to appear in society in seedy attire, not to mention a hole in his coat, and he will immediately be kicked out of it. Your husband shall not be of this kidney, if I can help it. The world has no sympathy with intellectual poverty, it never had — (*takes snuff*) no more have I, so make no silly opposition, for I have made up my mind to see you richly married, and there's an end.

Ellen. (*aside*) You hear?

Charles. (*aside*) When I gain the lawsuit, he will change his tone.

Strange. I fancy I hear some one down stairs; go, Ellen, you know who I am at home to.

Ellen. (*aside*) Be cautious.

Charles. (*aside*) All right — don't be long.

(*Exit ELLEN, door L. U. E.*)

Strange. (*seats himself near the table*) Yes — yes, I see I must have an eye on Mr. Charles Conquest, for Ellen has set her heart upon this youth more than I thought. He had better not let me catch him here, that's all. (*CHARLES makes a face at him*) If they think they can hoodwink me they never were more mistaken in their lives. After being taken in once with the head of Shakespeare, I'm not likely to be gulled a second time with the head of anything or anybody, for I now suspect one half the world is secretly plotting against the other. Aye

-aye, I've bought my experience — my perception has not been sharpened for nothing.

Enter ELLEN.

Ellen. It is your old friend, Mr. Maxwellton, and that bright youth, his son.

Strange. Ah, ah, my friend Maxwellton, the very man I was anxious to see — that bright youth, that you seem to turn up your nose at, will very shortly come into a thousand a-year, besides what his father will leave him, — ask them to come up!

Ellen. I nodded to Mary over the banisters, that she might admit them.

Strange. Then set two chairs ready.

Ellen. (*aside, placing chairs*) How unfortunate, their coming just at this time. (*aside to CHARLES*) Pray, be cautious!

Charles. I say, Ellen, contrive to send them away soon, — upon my soul, I'm getting the cramp, I'm all over pins and needles. (*Ellen makes a sign for him to be quiet, and seating herself, begins to sew again*)

Enter MAXWELTON and his son SAMMY, door L. U. E.

Max. (*shaking hands*) Ah! my old friend, I'm glad to see you on your legs again.

Strange. Thank you, — thank you. (*shaking hands with his SON*) And how are you, Mr. Samuel? (*SAM nods his head and grins stupidly without speaking, rubbing his hand round his hat, ELLEN rises up from her chair and makes a bow to old MAXWELTON*)

Max. Ah! good-morning, Miss Strange; (*to his SON*) go, sir, and pay your respects to that lady!

Sam. (*grinning stupidly*) Ah! ah! (*going up to her, nods his head, and then wanders round the room, vacantly looking up at the pictures, &c.*)

Strange. Sit down, sit down, my friends. (*calling*) Mr. Samuel, there is a chair here for you.

Max. (*to his SON*) Here, take my hat and cane, (*aside*) don't be wandering about the room like a fool you are no longer a boy. (*he sits down near to STRANGE*)

Sam. (*taking the hat and stick*) Oh! (*vacantly*) then I'm a man now — when I'm out! and a stupid ass when I'm at home, am I?

Max. (*aside, out of temper*) Go along — take your hat off — don't expose yourself and me too.

(*SAM. walks about, not knowing where to put the hat and stick, catches sight of the busts, then with evident satisfaction places a hat upon each, the stick on one side, taking his seat next his father,*

who, in the mean time has been bowing and taking snuff out of the box of STRANGE, and STRANGE out of his)

Max. I have no doubt you have thought me neglectful in not calling ere this to see you, but the truth is, having, each time I passed, that (*looking at his son*) stupid son of mine with me, I could not get him to come in before, I believe because it was later in the day than at present; as the daylight declines his fear begins. (*SAM looks about vacantly, occasionally making faces and nervous twitches with his person, as if inflicted with St. Vitus's dance*)

Strange. I don't quite understand you; why, what have we done to you, Mr. Samuel, that you should refuse to accompany your father in his visit to an old friend.

Sam. Oh! oh! Papa knows. (*looking round in alarm*)

Max. The fact is, two houses in this street have, to the astonishment of the neighborhood, been shut up for a number of years. A report is current among the idle gossips, that they are both connected with some horrid murder, the details of which I forget, and that a ghost has taken possession of the property. Some of the females of my establishment, the old cook among the rest, has for years thoroughly impressed him with the truth of this stupid story; though I must confess that it does seem strange, the landlord should have allowed his property to remain so long without a tenant.

Strange. I am still in the dark. What has that to do with his refusing to enter my house?

Max. Why, you, my friend, have taken one of these very identical houses.

Strange. Have I? Then that accounts for my getting it so cheap—I took it for seven years on a repairing lease; well, (*smiling*) I have never as yet met the ghost of this murdered gentleman or lady, and so as I cannot clear up the mystery, it must still belong to the dread obscure.

Max. The crime, I believe, was committed on a young man;—so the story goes.

Sam. (*who has been listening to this in extreme alarm*) No, papa; no, no—on a beautiful young lady.

Strange. Oh, on a lady, was it? Ah! I believe female ghosts are admitted to look better than men, in their long white bed-gowns. (*smiling*) Why, Mr. Samuel, (*they all rise*) I thought you had grown too much of a man to put faith in such idle stories; you'll try to persuade me next that you are afraid to go to bed in the dark.

Sam. And so I am. I always look up the chimney, and under the bed, for fear of thieves; I burn a rushlight too.

Strange. (*smiling*) What for? That will not stop the robbers.

Sam. Yes it will. If there's a light, they're done for. I know that—but you are only trying of me. (*with satisfaction*)

I'm not such a fool as you think. (*retires nodding to him, smiling stupidly, looking round the room at the pictures, &c.*)

Max. (*aside*) You know he had a blow on the head when quite a boy, which, I fear, has not helped his intellect as a man; he read, too, in a long illness, clean through an antiquated circulating library — the "Mysteries of Udolpho," and all that far-fetched rubbish of the old school, has, I believe, affected his imagination so deeply, that he fancies the ghosts of murdered people are only waiting a fit opportunity to make their appearance before him.

Strange. But I thought a celebrated surgeon had told you that he might, in a few years more, outgrow the effects of the blow on his head.

Max. Yes, possibly, through some great change in his physical or mental constitution. (*goes up stage and looks at a picture, R.*)

Strange. (*aside*,) An idea has just struck me! What greater change than to jump from a single to a married life? If that's not both a mental and physical revolution, I don't know what is. (*looks at SAMUEL, who is with his father*) The young man is rich — it would be an advantageous match for Ellen.

Charles. (*aside*) Ellen, I can read your uncle's thoughts; — he is projecting a marriage between that rich idiot and yourself.

Ellen. (*aside*) I'll starve and die first.

Strange. Mr. Samuel! here, I wish to speak to you. Now you have grown up a man, have you never thought of taking a wife?

Sam. (*laughing stupidly*) He, he, he, he!

Strange. You are well off — descended from a good family, too — you must keep up the name of the Maxweltons.

Sam. He, he, he, he!

Strange. (C.) Your very name is provocative to love. "Maxwelton braes are bonny" — so the old song says — and all the vocal world is still running after Annie Laurie. Surely you will not be left without a bride.

Sam. (R. C.) He, he, he, he!

Max. (R. — *aside*) Can't you say anything besides "he, he, he?"

Sam. (*aside*) Oh, what shall I say?

Max. (*aside*) Say, "I must beg leave to differ with you" — or, "I quite agree to that" — according to the subject. (SAMUEL mutters to himself as if rehearsing what his father had told him, then looks again at the pictures hung up about the room)

Strange. (*aside*) I must find some means of sending Ellen and that youth out of the room; I can then broach this matrimonial project of mine to the father, without fear of its being known before the time. (*aloud*) Mr. Samuel, I observe you admire my pictures?

Sam. I must beg leave to differ with you.

Strange. Oh! then you think I have been taken in? — they are not originals, but copies? — wretched daubs, in fact, eh?

Sam. I quite agree to that.

Max. (*aside*) The blundering booby.

Strange. (*in astonishment*) Do you?

Max. (*aside*) I'm ashamed of you, — exposing me as well as yourself.

Sam. There's no pleasing of you, no how. I said what you told me.

Strange. I'm sorry, Mr. Samuel, to hear you pass such a sweeping condemnation on my collection of oil paintings; I have some rare prints up stairs, — would you like to see them? my niece there, Miss Ellen, will accompany you.

Sam. According to the subject. (*aside to his father*) That's right.

Max. (*aside*) Oh, he's incurable.

Strange. "According to the subject" — Oh yes, — the subjects are numerous, and executed by a variety of masters — Ellen, take young Mr. Maxwelton with you. You know in which portfolio they are?

Ellen. There are so many portfolios! Indeed, uncle, I don't remember.

Strange. (*aside, crossly*) Yes, you do — why make a difficulty of that which ought to be a pleasure? I wish to say a few words alone to Mr. Maxwelton.

Ellen. (*aside to CHARLES*) I dread some accident in my absence.

Charles. (*aside*) Never fear, I shall overhear their plans, and we can then act accordingly.

Strange. Now, Mr. Samuel, my niece is waiting to conduct you.

Sam. (*grinning stupidly*) He, he, he, he!

Max. (*aside*) He's at his damned "he, he!" again.

Ellen. (R. — to SAM) I am waiting, sir, your pleasure.

Sam. (*aside to his father*) What shall I do?

Max. (*aside, whispering softly*) Take her hand

Sam. (*not quite hearing*) Take her what?

Max. (*aside*) Her hand.

Sam. Oh, what shall I say?

Max. (*aside, in a passion*) Oh, you are a pretty subject to have to do with. (*turns away in disgust*)

Sam. (*taking the offered hand of ELLEN*) He, he, he, he! yes miss, — he, he, he, he! yes, — "you are a pretty subject to have to do with."

(*Exit, leading her out awkwardly at door, R. U. E.*)

Max. (*aside, sighing*) Ah, I believe he is beyond cure.

Strange. I wish to make a proposition to you, — we are such old friends, that I know I may do so without reserve, or creating a diminution in our friendship, should you view the matter in a different light to myself.

Max. To be sure; what is it! (*they both sit down*)

Strange. We know each other well, and each other's circumstances, so there is so necessity to beat about the bush; you have an only son, — I have an only niece; true, I can't portion her off as you can your son.

Max. Well, what of that?

Strange. I know, likewise, money is not your object. What say you to the young folks making a match of it?

Max. My dear friend, I feel highly honored by your proposition; nothing would give me greater delight could it be managed: but there are two or three insurmountable difficulties.

Charles. (*aside*) Thank goodness.

Strange. I don't see them. What are they?

Max. In the first place, your niece would never consent, and I don't blame her for it; you must see, to my misfortune, that my son has little or no brains, lacks understanding, and in fact, three parts of a fool.

Charles. (*aside*) Quite a fool, I should think.

Max. Your niece, on the contrary, is a clever, talented girl, full of health and spirit; and what is better still in the affairs of life, she seems to possess practical good sense.

Strange. Granted; and just as it should be. Her superabundant talent will make up for your son's deficiency — that's the true balance of power: besides, according to Lavater, happiness is produced by contrast. Two of a trade, you know, never agree; — so, you see, that part of your objection is, I hope, set aside.

Max. Still, it does not give your niece's consent.

Strange. Oh, there's no fear of that. She's an amiable, tractable girl. I'll answer for her consent before long.

Charles. (*aside*) Don't make quite so sure of it.

Max. I won't deny that I should like to see my son married — if he marries at all — to just such a pretty, clever girl as your niece; but you have forgotten, setting aside mental disqualification, the difference in their ages. Now, I think the man should be at least ten years older than the woman, whereas your niece must be four or five years older than my son. (*they both rise*)

Strange. Oh, that is an absurd objection! besides, you are in error; I don't believe there is a twelvemonths' difference in their ages.

Max. My friend, you forget I know when she was born. I'll take you three to one — she is four years, within a month or two, older.

Strange. Agreed! — I'll prove it in a second. Come, you shall see the register of her birth; at the same time I'll show you an old picture I am doing up of Prometheus chained to the rock.

(*Exeunt, R. U. E.*)

Charles. (*turning his head after them, blowing*) Prometheus

chained by his rock never had the cramp as I have — he could contrive to stretch his legs, which is more than I can do in this attitude. Come what may, I must change my position, if only for half a minute. (*crawls from under table, limping, and rubbing his shins*) Ah, bless my soul, what a relief! no one knows the luxury of standing upright on his legs, until he has been trussed like a fowl for three quarters of an hour. So they are contriving a marriage between that booby and my Ellen; — well, I forbid the bans. (*seats himself on sofa*) Where is she **all** this time? (*listens, going to door*) Hang it, here's somebody coming! I must resume my painful position again; — hide my diminished — (*crawls under the table, thrusting his head up again*) — not head, but body. I wonder how long I am to remain squatting here like a hare on her form?

Enter SAMUEL, R. D.

(*aside*) Oh! it's that asinine specimen of the human race, my rival!

Sam. (*looking round*) Oh! there's no one here! Where are they gone? I don't like to be left alone in a haunted house like this — the carpet covers the floor, and the blood spots are underneath; — murder's never washed out, they say — even soda-water won't do it, 'cos it's been tried. I'm sorry I left miss up stairs — he, he, he, he! she's gentle, so I don't mind her; she's nice, too — I should soon like her, even better than our old cook, or old nurse Susan either.

Charles. (*aside*) I should think you would, you stupid bump.

Sam. She's got such a little soft hand, too — he, he, he, he! That's funny; it's better than cook's, 'cos her fingers are red, and fat, and short, and greasy.

Charles. (*aloud, forgetting himself*) Why, curse the fellow, he's really beginning to take a fancy to my Ellen. He's not quite such an idiot after all.

Sam. (*looking round in alarm*) What's that? It's a voice in the air! — ghosts live in the air! (*calling*) Papa, papa! Oh, I wish I hadn't come here. It don't speak any more! Oh, if it was dark — pitch dark; that's the time of day for them — I wouldn't be here then for all the world. I know they can't appear or hurt any one in the daylight — that's a comfort. I wish papa would make haste, though; — he won't ever catch me here again, I lay. I'm not such a fool as people say I am.

Charles. (*aside*) It would be deuced hard to match you.

Sam. (*catching sight of STRANGE'S snuff-box on the table — taking it up*) I know what this is; — it's a snuff-box.

Charles. (*aside*) Wonderful intelligence!

Sam. (*trying to open the box by various ways*) It won't open like pa's. (*feels in his pocket*) If I had my knife, row, I'd do it; but I haven't got it, so I can't. (*goes to the table, and sits*

down in the chair that ELLEN occupied) Ah! miss's scissors — they'll open it. *(makes an effort to open it with the scissors, and drops the box just under the nose of CHARLES)* There, now, Mr. Strange will find me out, for I've spilt all the snuff. *(CHARLES makes a noise with his mouth, as if blowing the snuff away)* Oh, oh! — it's alive! *(rushing back staring at CHARLES, who opens his eyes and mouth two or three times before sneezing outright)*

Charles. Infernal! — he has nearly choked me with snuff. *(sneezes)*

Sam. *(in a fright, getting near the sofa)* Oh! help, help! — papa! papa!

Charles. Silence, you idiot, or I'll knock your brains out — that is, if you've got any.

Sam. *(in excessive fright)* It's the ghost of the murdered lady! — help! help! *(makes an effort to run, but is stopped by CHARLES, who wheels the table, which runs upon castors, in his way)*

Charles. No, I'll be hanged if you shall give the alarm — I'll throttle you first.

Sam. *(falling back on sofa)* Oh! don't throttle me — don't murder me! — mercy! mercy! *(hides his face in his arms on the sofa, and kicks)* Oh! oh!

Charles. *(wheels the table into its place again)* Silence, I say — don't be alarmed! look at me, you stupid fool — I'm no ghost.

Enter ELLEN, R. D.

Ellen. Why, what's the matter, Mr. Samuel? *(tries to lift him up)*

Sam. *(not looking)* Oh, mercy! Ah! *(shrieking)* its hands are as cold as ice.

Ellen. *(aside to CHARLES)* How has this happened?

Charles. *(aside)* He dropped some snuff just under my nose, so that the devil himself could not help sneezing.

Ellen. Oh, dear Charles, we shall be discovered — there is no help for it. Stay, I have it! — hide yourself under the table, and give me the pasteboard head. *(CHARLES disappears, lifts up the cover, and gives ELLEN the model, dropping the cover again)* Rise, Mr. Samuel, indeed there is nothing to fear. *(hides the head behind her)*

Sam. *(lifts up his head, and seeing ELLEN, rises quickly)* Oh, miss, I'm so glad you've come! It's the spirit! *(pointing to table)* Why, it's vanished!

Ellen. Oh, it must be fancy. *(showing the false head)* Look, this is what you saw.

Sam. *(starting back in alarm)* Ah! *(looking at it)* She had a cap on! — oh, lor', have mercy, it's burnt off in a flash of lightning, and that's all that's left of the — *(calling loudly)* Papa! papa!

Ellen. (throwing head over back of sofa in alarm, taking his hand) Now my good young man, pray be quiet! Don't cry out any more; you may be sure that I would not stay here if there were any danger; nothing comes to hurt me.

Sam. Don't it? Oh, then I'm safe with you —

Ellen. (coaxing him) To be sure you are; come, sit down. (takes him to sofa, both sitting down) Surely you are not frightened to be alone with me! are you?

Sam. (keeping her hand, and looking at her) No, no! not with you. (smiling) He, he, he! I'll do all you ask me.

Charles. (aside, lifting up cover) I'll be shot if he's not going to make love to my Ellen!

Ellen. Well, you must not squeeze my hand quite so tight.

Sam. Oh! but I like it.

Ellen. Yes, but you must let go now, — pray, let go.

Sam. No, I'd rather not, thank you.

Charles. (lifting up cover, aside) Oh! I'm not going to stand this, I know. (drops cover)

Ellen. As you see you were frightened without cause, you won't say anything to your father or my uncle, about this silly head you took for a ghost, will you?

Sam. No, no; but I don't like this house, so you'll come and see me at home, won't you? I'm not afeard there.

Ellen. Very well, but let go my hand now.

Sam. I can't, he, he, he! I feel as if I was getting tipsy.

Charles. (lifting up table cover) Oh, damn it! I can't stand this any longer. (thrusts out his leg and gives him a kick)

Sam. (catches sight of his leg and exclaims in alarm) Oh! there, there! the ghost without a head. (starts up in horror, rushes to the large chair halloing "Papa, papa," hides his head in it, and kicks until he pitches himself and the chair over, where he lies until picked up by MR. STRANGE. CHARLES comes from the table, runs up to SAM, and piles one or two pictures over him as he lay sprawling on the floor)

Charles. (in alarm to ELLEN) What's to be done now?

Ellen. Quick, quick? get beneath the table again, there is no help — we must risk the discovery. (he gets beneath the table and puts his head through as usual)

Charles. I say, Ellen, where's the false head?

Ellen. Hush! there's no time to get it now, they are here —

Enter STRANGE and MAXWELTON, hastily, R. D.

Strange. (addressing ELLEN) Good gracious, what's all this noise about? (seeing SAMUEL on the floor, STRANGE and MAX. pick him up)

Max. (to ELLEN) Pray, tell us what's the cause of this.

Ellen. Why, he foolishly got in his head that there was a spirit.

Sam. Oh no, it's not in *my* head, it's in *that* head. (*points to CHARLES*) Don't go near it, papa. (*taking his arm*) Make haste — come along — let's leave this haunted house; I knew it — I said it was full of ghosts.

Max. My poor boy, you are getting worse and worse every day; did you ever know me to tell you a falsehood? (*SAMUEL has his attention fixed on the head*) Answer me, sir!

Sam. (*his attention still fixed on the head*) No, papa, — no.

Max. Then I say, I'll forfeit my existence if there is anything alive here but ourselves: you see none of us are alarmed.

Sam. (*pointing to CHARLES*) There, there — again, I saw her eyes move — she winked at me — she'll throttle me, she said she would!

Max. (*in a passion*) For shame — you are worse than a baby. But I'll end this childish nonsense; you shall put your hand upon it — that will bring you to your senses. (*attempts to drag him up to the head*)

Sam. (*struggling*) Oh! no — no — no! — papa! — papa! — no — no!

Strange. (*stopping him*) My dear friend, leave him to me; I'll give him a proof that he is wrong in a minute. (*takes up the stick of MAXWELTON*) Look here, Mr. Samuel. (*goes towards the table*)

Ellen. (*aside in alarm*) Oh, mercy! what's he going to do?

Max. This head is made of pasteboard. With one blow of this stick I'll shatter it to pieces, and you shall pick up the bits. Will that convince you? (*lifts his stick, about to strike*)

Ellen. (*rushing forward, preventing him*) Oh, dear uncle, stay! you must not — it will be death to —

Strange. (*pushing her on one side*) Nonsense; I'll buy you a better head for ninepence. (*he raises his stick, and as he strikes at the head CHARLES bows beneath the table, and the stick strikes the table with a loud noise; immediately after CHARLES stands up, with the table resting on his shoulders; they all start in alarm, and when CHARLES moves towards them, they huddle round each other in fright*)

Ellen. Indeed, uncle, I'm very sorry that this should have happened.

Strange. (*to ELLEN*) What is all this mummary? — who is it? Answer me, for I see you know.

Ellen. (*taking out her handkerchief, crying*) Pardon, pardon, dear uncle.

Strange. Pardon who?

Charles. (*letting down the table, crawling out*) It's in vain, I see, to attempt any further concealment. (*takes the lady's cap off his head*)

Max. (*aside*) I see now; the spirits walk here to some purpose.

Strange. So, Mr. Charles Conquest!

Charles. Yes, sir; you refused me the hand of your niece,

and forbid me the house; our love for each other was too strong to be easily cast aside — we were thus forced upon this stratagem.

Strange. (to ELLEN) And you connived — assisted him in this deception. These are the tricks you play. Your eternal occupation of cap-making — 'tis now explained. This — (*snatching the cap out the hand of CHARLES*) this was made, no doubt, for our old friend Mrs. Wigsby, next door. (*mocking her*) "We all have our fancies — our hobbies, more or less, dear uncle!" — some girls sit all day at crochet, others at Berlin wool, while I scrub up old pictures morning, noon, and night. (*pitching the cap at her*) For shame, for shame! (*turning to CHARLES*) And you, sir, who have compromised the character of my niece, and the reputation of my house —

Charles. I offered, sir, to marry your niece — I do still; — what can a man of honor say or do more? (*speaks aside to ELLEN*)

Max. (*aside*) Come, come, my old friend, don't be hard on them; we should not forget that we were once young ourselves. I can't deceive myself. It would be sacrificing her to marry my son, while he is just the man for her in every way.

Strange. You are out of your senses! Why, he's worth no more than he stands up in. What must be the result of such a union? — poverty invariably swarms with children, and I should have to keep them all.

Max. You are in error — he must come into his uncle's property. I know his opposing counsel, who told me for certain that he should lose the cause. Before two days are over he'll be a rich man.

Strange. You don't say so!

Max. I'll take my oath of it.

Strange. That quite alters the case. (*aloud*) Here, Ellen — Mr. Conquest — a word with you both. (*they advance on each side of him*) I see opposition is in vain — that you have set your hearts upon each other. (*joins their hands*) There, you have my consent, Mr. Conquest, as soon as you can prove to me that you are able to keep a wife.

Ellen. Thanks, thanks, dear uncle.

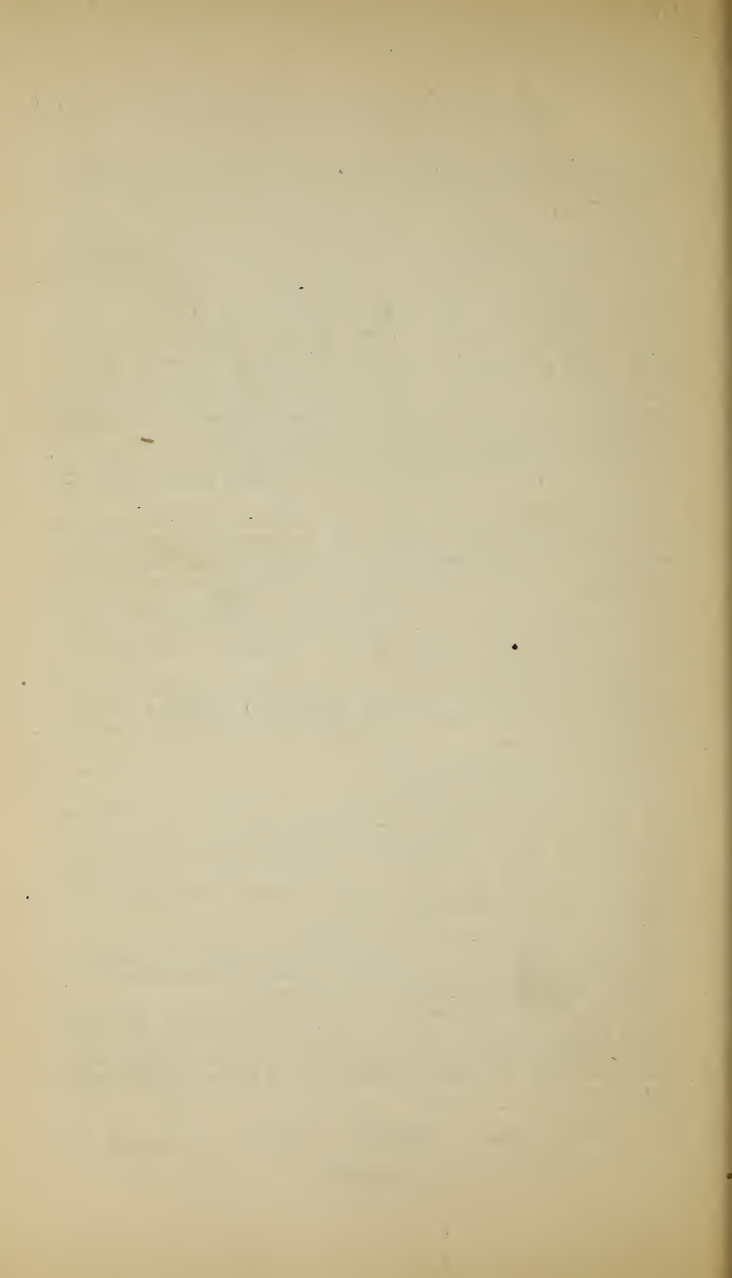
Charles. Sir, I am much beholden to you. Mr. Samuel, (*taking his hand*) I trust there is no ill-feeling between us?

Sam. What makes people play at ghosts?

Charles. Why, in this case, my friend, you see, it was to gain a wife. (*takes the hand of ELLEN and brings her forward — addressing audience*) And I trust that our friends here will admit that on some occasions, TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE.

R MAX. SAM. CHARLES. ELLEN. STRANGE. L

CURTAIN.



THE WELSH GIRL.

A Farce,

IN ONE ACT.

BY MRS. J. R. PLANCHE.

THE WELSH GIRL.

CHARACTERS.

	OLYMPIC, LONDON, 1830.	OLYMPIC, BOSTON, 1848.
SIR OWEN GRIFFITHS,	Mr. F. Matthews.	Mr. D. Whiting.
ALFRED, <i>his Nephew</i>	Mr. J. Bland.	Mr. Bland.
DAVID JONES	Mr. Salter.	
JULIA.	Madame Vestris.	Mrs. W. H. Smith.
DORA.	Mrs. Tayleure.	Mrs. Penson.

THE WELSH GIRL.

SCENE. — *An apartment in an old house of SIR OWEN GRIFFITHS, in Wales. Door at the back of the stage leading into the hall. Doors right and left to the different apartments. Chairs, table, sofa, &c. ALFRED discovered sitting at table, reading. DAVID JONES is heard speaking, as if to servants.*

Dav. Yes, I tell you he'll be here directly; so make haste, and get him a good dinner.

Alf. What's that I hear?

Enter DAVID.

You here, David!

Dav. Yes; here I am.

Alf. (*Aside.*) — Blunt as ever. — (*Aloud.*) — What chance has given us the pleasure of your company, pray?

Dav. *No chance*; but the *commands* of Sir Owen. I have been sent forward to announce his arrival.

Alf. My uncle on his road hither? What the deuce has brought him down here, to a place he has not been near for the last ten years of his life, at least?

Dav. One of his whims; he wants to see his steward, he says, and to ascertain what sort of condition the old house is in — he'll be pleased to find you here.

Alf. Do you think so? I came here for the benefit of the Welsh air.

Dav. And ale, I suppose; the Welsh ale, you know — (*smacks his lips*) — capital stuff!

Alf. Capital stuff, indeed, David. But I was tired of London and its gayeties and gravities: the former, of necessity, introduces one to the latter — one goes on heedlessly enjoying one's self for the time with the gayest of the gay — when, suddenly, one's career is arrested by a regiment of most *grave* and *potent* creditors; and that spoils all, you know, David.

Dav. Ay, I dare say it does; but never mind; a good marriage will settle all that for you.

Alf. Indeed!

Dav. Yes; Sir Owen has got an excellent match in his eye for you. And I've no doubt, if you consent, and don't make any fuss about it — and why should you? — he'll pay all your debts again.

Alf. (*Smiling.*) — He'll never pay them, David, upon those conditions.

Dav. Ah, take care what you are about! you know how passionate and whimsical Sir Owen is. Take my advice, and marry anybody.

Alf. It's not to be done, David! There is an insurmountable obstacle, David — I am already married!

Dav. The devil you are! And, of course, you have married the very girl that Sir Owen insisted on your *not* marrying?

Alf. Precisely.

Dav. And without any money?

Alf. Not a shilling.

Dav. You have done very wrong.

Alf. I can't help it, David. Couldn't you have guessed, now, that there must have been something *very* particular that would make me come and live here, even for a single day? By Jove, I wouldn't remain in this crazy old castle half a minute by *myself* for a dukedom.

Dav. Why, you don't mean to tell me that she is with you here?

Alf. In this very house.

Dav. Then it's all over with you — you'd better have shot yourself — ay, much better, for then you'd have been provided for.

Alf. Ha! ha! ha! — very pleasantly, certainly.

Dav. Yes, it's all very well to laugh now; but you won't laugh if Sir Owen should catch a glimpse of your lady.

Alf. I know my danger — I've smuggled a wife — one of the sort altogether prohibited — not admitted to duty. It would play the deuce with me in my uncle's exchequer —

Air. — *Alfred.* “*New Year's Night.*”

Pride, the coast of joy blockading,
Would declare her contraband;
And for thus his laws evading,
Seize — condemn — the goods I'd land.
Spurning customs mean and narrow,
Which would make of hearts a trade,
Our's both marked by Love's “*broad arrow*,”
Duty but to Hymen paid.
Spurning,” &c.

Well, but tell me what's to be done? What can we do with her to keep her out of my uncle's sight?

Dav. Lock her up in one of the empty rooms.

Alf. O, that won't do — *she* wouldn't agree to that, I can tell you — she is a little headstrong body, very fond of having her own way.

Dav. You were talking of a *woman*, you know.

Alf. Well, well; don't favor me with any remarks but those to the purpose, Mr. David — what can we do that she won't object to? She'll want to see Sir William, I know. Before we left town, she wished to go to him, and laugh him out of his nonsense, as she calls it, but I was afraid to let her.

Dav. He does ~~n~~ know her; does he?

Alf. No — he has never seen her.

Dav. Humph! Well; I don't know, I'm sure — she must keep out of his way for a while — but, if he should happen to see her, we *must* say she is somebody.

Alf. But who, David, who?

Dav. Why, if I remember rightly, old Dora, at the lodge here, had a little niece, who used to come now and then on a visit to her — she must now be about eighteen years old — she lived with an old grandfather.

Alf. I have not seen her.

Dav. Perhaps she is not here just now — all the better, or he might see one too many.

Alf. Well, well; so let it be — that will do famously — and if Sir Owen should see her, not having the least idea of her being my wife, he will be delighted with her — I know he will — she is so amiable — so graceful — so full of vivacity — so pretty — so — in short, David, she is a perfect pocket Venus. We've only been married eight days.

Dav. O, that's just about the time I should have guessed.

Enter JULIA, running in from back entrance.

Ju. O, dear Alfred — what is this I hear? Your uncle, Sir Owen, expected here every moment — is it so?

Alf. It is, indeed; but *you* need not care — *you* don't mind him, you know!

Ju. Well, I don't think I do — *much*.

Alf. However, I think for the present it will be more prudent for you not to show yourself — till we see what sort of a humor he is in.

Ju. And — and what's to become of me, pray?

Alf. (*Smiling.*) — Why, we did think of locking you up; but, upon second thoughts, we determined that we would let you have your liberty.

Dav. (*To ALFRED.*) — I say — you'd better let him see her — the old boy likes to look at a pretty woman, though he pretends not to care about them.

Ju. Who is that person, Alfred?

Alf. That, Julia, is my old friend, David Jones, whom you have often heard me speak of — who used to talk me to sleep with his old stories — he knows my uncle well — and advises that, to ward off the first effects of Sir Owen's rage, it would be better that he should not see you just at present, as my wife.

Ju. Not as your wife — what then, pray, sir?

Alf. Now, now — be quiet, and you shall hear.

Dav. (*Aside.*) — Hot as fire, I see — all the better — I hate your cold-blooded people.

Alf. Old Dora has a niece just about your age — a native of North Wales —

Ju. (*Delighted.*) — O, I know; you want me to be the little Welsh girl — I'll do it — I shall like it of all things.

Air. — “ *Hunting the Hare.* ”

Now look you, good sir; hur was born at Llanberris;
Hur name it is Taffline — hur father's is Jones;
Hur plays on the harp; and hur pride and hur care is
To sing all the songs that hur dear country owns.
Ap Rhys, ap Llewellyn, ap Griffiths, ap Madoc,
Hur grandfather's grandfather's father-in-law
Was come of the blood of the famous Caradoc,
Who with Julius Cæsar once played at see-saw.

Alf. }
and } Capital! Brava! brava!
Dav. }

Ju. But what about old Dora? Will you be able to make her understand what she is to say and do?

Dav. Leave that to me, Miss — Ma'am — I beg pardon — I'll undertake to make her know her right hand from her left.

Ju. And so I am about to see this *terrible* uncle, who, without knowing, hates me — *me*, who am so well inclined to love *him*.

Dav. You don't seem to be very much *afraid* of the meeting, though, ma'am.

Ju. Afraid — no; why should I? I hear that he is kind-hearted, though passionate; gallant, though somewhat ancient — that the sight of a — nice — pretty — little woman quite agitates him; and, in that case, you know, *he'll* have the most cause to be *afraid*!

Alf. Dear Julia, you can't fail in pleasing him, I'm sure.

Ju. Yes, I think I shall succeed with him. My father always used to say that he was sure I should accomplish anything I ever undertook — I was such a determined little devil!

Dav. (*Aside.*) — She's a capital wench.

Alf. Your father!

Ju. Yes, sir, my father — a man of sound, excellent judgment.

Alf. You see, David — I told you what a little, wilful, spoiled thing she was.

Ju. I should like to know which of us two have proved themselves the most wilful — who married a little girl without a penny, when they were particularly desired not to do so? You won't say that was me, I hope? But I had better go now and prepare — where am I to get the dress from, though?

Dav. I'll go and find old Dora, and send her to you directly.

Alf. There's the carriage; I caught a glimpse of it as it turned the corner of the road.

Dav. Then I must be quick; so, your servant, for the present.
[Exit DAVID.]

Ju. Good by, Alfred; when you see me again, you'll scarcely know me yourself — O, lud — the carriage has stopped. — (*Runs off, c. R. H.*)

Alf. I had better go and offer my arm to the old gentleman. — (*As he is going off at the back, enter SIR OWEN, followed by servants.*)

Sir O. There, there, my good people — that will do. I'm very much obliged to you — but, God bless you — don't smother me. — (*Exeunt servants.*) — Their joy at seeing me is really very troublesome. Well, nephew, you little thought of seeing me here, I suppose?

Alf. It is an *unexpected pleasure*, certainly, sir; but how have you borne the journey? — without much fatigue, I hope, sir.

Sir O. I'm tired, sir; very tired; this plaguy gout makes an old man of me.

Alf. (*Aside.*) — A hard case, certainly, at seventy-five.

Sir O. How long have you been here?

Alf. Only a few days, sir.

Sir O. Humph! the old house does not look so badly, after all.

Alf. By no means, sir; and the situation is delectable — hill and dale — rock and river — ruins of castles and sylvan cottages — O, I could live here forever!

Sir O. Very well, sir, very well; pray do. Since you have become so suddenly fond of solitude, remain here, and reflect upon your former dissolute and extravagant conduct.

Alf. I will reflect upon it, sir, provided *you* do not; but do not spoil the pleasure of our meeting by giving me a lecture; let's forget and forgive. I'll excuse all the little annoyances you have caused me — you do the same by me, and let's live happily and comfortably together for the rest of our lives.

Sir O. This is all very pretty; but I'm not to be joked or bantered out of my opinion, sir. Live happily and comfortably with you, indeed, sir — why, you never, by any chance, do a single thing I wish you to do.

Alf. O, sir!

Sir O. Why, you puppy, *do* you? Have you given up that marriage, sir, that I so highly disapprove?

Alf. But, dear sir, you expect one to do impossibilities.

Sir O. It's no such thing, sir; but you'll be sorry for it, sir: you'll have cause to repent your disobedience. You'll go on, sir, until you make me discard you altogether, and drive me into getting a wife for myself.

Alf. You! Uncle!

Sir O. Yes, sir; and why not, pray?

Alf. Why, sir, I thought you had too much regard for your own comfort.

Sir O. Comfort, sir — *you* are no comfort to me, at all events — I couldn't be worse off in that respect — I want a companion

sir; you, you know, are always too much occupied to come near me.

Alf. Dear sir, I must beg your pardon; for, really, I think I am always paying you visits.

Sir O. Never, sir, but when you want me to be paying your debts.

Alf. Well, sir, but you must confess that's very often.

Sir O. You'll find the difference when I'm married, sir — I dare say at this moment you are over head and ears in debt. Well, well; I can't talk about that now — there, go along, sir, and send the steward here.

Alf. Dear uncle! now you are going to desire him to give me some money; how very kind of you!

Sir O. It's no such thing, sir. But where the devil's David all this time?

Enter DAVID, hastily.

Dav. Here I am.

Alf. (*As he goes out, aside to DAVID.*) — If you have an opportunity, talk to him about my wife. [*Exit ALFRED.*]

Sir O. Where have you been to all this time?

Dav. I have been trying to make all things comfortable for you, to be sure; but I don't know whether I shall be able to manage it or not; but it ain't my fault, you know — you would come all on a sudden, in this queer way — I'm glad Alfred's here, though — you'll have *somebody* to speak to.

Sir O. Well, David, I'm not sorry for that myself, though he does provoke me; but, David, tell me — who was that girl I saw bounding over the hall just now, as I came in?

Dav. I didn't see any girl on the hall; but perhaps it was old Dora's niece — she comes here sometimes on a visit to her aunt — she may be here now.

Sir O. (*Rises.*) — By the by, that old woman is a very good servant, and ought not to be forgotten; it's too often the case, I fear, that servants who have been for years in the family are merely looked upon as some of the old fixtures, and treated accordingly; but this must not be — something must be done for her.

Dav. Because she happens to have a pretty niece, I suppose!

Sir O. What an old fool you are! What's her niece to me? — and I don't know whether she is pretty or not, for I didn't see her face — there *was* a time, indeed, when I might have been a little curious about such matters; but now —

Dav. Yes; there *was* a time, indeed, when you were a precious — (*putting his hand over his mouth*) — I was going to say —

Sir O. What, sir — what?

Dav. Well, a bad-un, then; but, I didn't, you know — I didn't —

Sir O. Ha, ha! David — that was when I was a fine young man of five and twenty.

Dav. Yes, I know; and for that reason you might, I think, be a trifle more indulgent to *that* fine young man of five and twenty.

Sir O. Not at all — not at all; I can't look upon it in the same light.

Dav. (*Aside.*) — No; because now you are obliged to look upon it through your spectacles.

Sir O. What *are* you muttering about?

Dav. Nothing; nothing; but it's rather hard upon the poor boy, I think.

Sir O. Now, David, don't talk nonsense. Can anything be more stupid or ridiculous, for instance, than that love affair of his?

Dav. Yes, a great many things; but you'll alter your mind about that — I know you will.

Sir O. Never, David, never — upon that point I am determined — I am as immovable as Harlech Castle. Let him marry the young lady I propose to him, and I'll forgive him everything; but if he marries that girl, I've done with him — I've done with him forever.

Dav. Now, Sir Owen, suppose he *does* marry her; it will be a shocking crime, certainly, for the young man to marry the girl he loves. I suppose you would have him abandon the poor thing after gaining her affections, and would give him an extra five thousand pounds to become a villain.

Sir O. David, you forget yourself!

Dav. No, sir; *I* don't forget myself.

Sir O. (*Agitated, but angry.*) — Humph! — if he marries that girl, I'll disinherit him.

Dav. You will? And what'll you do with your money?

Sir O. Leave it to charities — to my servants — to —

Dav. Don't leave any to me; for d— me if I'll have it. What! disinherit your own nephew! your poor dear sister's only child! — and for what? — for follies which he inherits from his uncle.

Sir O. (*Rises.*) — How do you presume to talk to me in this manner? Now, David, don't argue the point with me any more — you'll put me in a passion, stir up the bile, and give me a fit of the gout. — (*Throws himself on the sofa.*)

Dav. It drives me mad, Sir Owen, to see you insist on making miseries for yourself.

Sir O. What do you mean, sir?

Dav. Why, if you deprive that boy of the means of living, won't he be miserable? and if he is miserable, won't *you* be miserable? and if you're miserable, shan't I be miserable? and then a pretty life *you'll* have of it! — I'll answer for your being uncomfortable enough.

Sir O. Will you hold your tongue, sir? Be silent, or leave the room. I will not be dictated to by my footman.

Dav. (*After a moment's pause of astonishment.*) — Footman! Did I hear right? Was it footman he said? After all these years of service in war and peace, to be degraded, and called footman! And by you, Sir Owen — it's more than I can bear. When I faced

death by your side — shipmate was the word then, sir — not footman!

Sir O. (*Much agitated — aside.*) — Poor fellow! poor fellow! I've hurt his feelings. — (*Aloud.*) — David!

Dav. I can — I have borne with your whims — with your passion — but the old sailor cannot, *will* not, put up with a degradation.

Sir O. But, David — what — a tear!

Dav. (*Dashing it off.*) — It is rage. If you hadn't been my commander, I would — you should —

Sir O. (*Holding out his hand.*) — Come, come, forget it, and give me your hand.

Dav. (*Turning away.*) — Humph!

Sir O. (*Getting up.*) — How's this? You refuse to forgive the impetuosity of an old friend?

Dav. (*Suddenly turns, and takes SIR O.'s hand.*) — O, Sir Owen! Sir Owen!

Sir O. There, now, promise me to forget what has passed. I was wrong — very wrong.

Dav. Sir Owen, it was my fault.

Sir O. No, no — I was to blame.

Dav. I tell you it was me.

Sir O. Why, David — you are never going to begin again, are you? Well, well — let me advise you now — don't talk to me any more about my nephew — you see the consequence. Come, promise me that — won't you?

Dav. As you please, Sir Owen.

Sir O. Although we've had a breeze, it has not been a very grateful one. I'll even try the more genial air of heaven for a while. — (*DAVID offers his arm.*) — No, thank you, David — old friend! — comrade! I can go alone. [*Exit.*]

Dav. (*Looking after SIR OWEN.*) — He's a good-hearted old chap, after all, though; but he's got a precious lot of obstinacy in his composition.

Ju. (*Peeping in, dressed as a Welsh peasant, speaking very low.*) — David! David!

Dav. O, you may come in, miss! Sir Owen's not here.

Enter JULIA, followed by DORA.

Ju. Well, David, have you said anything to Sir Owen? How does he seem disposed?

Dav. He's indisposed!

Ju. Indisposed?

Dav. To hear anything about you — I mean, miss. We *very* nearly quarrelled, and I have been obliged to promise I won't mention Mr. Alfred's name to him any more; so I must leave you to fight your own battle.

Ju. And so I will, like a good soldier! and if my attack does not make him surrender some of his prejudice against me, my name isn't Julia.

Dav. I hope it will, from my heart.

Ju. It must — it shall! I have always had my own way, and I always will — if I can get it.

Dav. Now, old woman, you are sure you know your business?

Do. O. yes — pless you! I am not once, by any chance, to speak the truth — look you — that's it.

Dav. Humph! that won't be very difficult, I dare say. Hush! — here comes Sir Owen; so I'll be off, Miss. [Exit, L. H.]

Ju. He will call me Miss.

Do. Here he is, ma'am. Are you not frightened?

Ju. No — o, Dora; are you?

Do. Why, I am a little, ma'am — Sir Owen is so very passionate — look you. — (*They stand aside.*)

Enter SIR OWEN, not observing them, and seats himself on the sofa.

Sir O. So — I'm better now. What a rage Davy put himself into — faith, I don't much wonder at it; but then he provoked me so about that puppy of a nephew of mine, — he's a good-hearted old fellow, though, after all, and would, I believe, go to the devil to serve me. — (*During this, JULIA has been pushing DORA forward, who appears afraid to advance.*)

Ju. (*Aside to DORA.*) — There — go: he really does not look half such a Turk as I took him for.

Do. (*To SIR O.*) — I peg pardon, Sir Owen — perhaps I disturb you.

Sir O. No, no, my good woman. What is it? — what is it?

Do. I come, Sir Owen, to pay my respects to you; and I've brought my little niece, look you, to make her courtesy, and thank you for your kindness to her old aunt; for although we have not seen your honor, Cot pless you, for some years, my heart! we all had reason to *feel* we were not forgotten by you.

Sir O. And so that's your niece, Dora? — a nice, tidy-looking lass, indeed.

Do. O, yes, Sir Owen, she's very tidy — but you are busy, sir. We'd better go, my love. — (*To JULIA.*)

Sir O. No, no; stay a minute, — (*To JULIA.*) — Come, child. — (*He beckons her forward; she keeps retreating.*) — Is that your way of coming forward, my dear? You must teach her better than that, Dame, or she'll never get on in the world.

Do. Yes, Sir Owen; but she has not long been with me, pless you. — (*Aside.*) — O, I shouldn't have said that, I suppose — it is the truth. — (*To JULIA.*) — Come, Taffline — come and speak to Sir Owen. — (*She takes her hand, and leads her forward; SIR OWEN gazes at her for some time.*)

Sir O. There's not much family likeness, Dame.

Do. La! don't you think so, Sir Owen! She's always been thought the very model of me, look you. — (*Aside.*) — That will be sure to be right.

Sir O. (*Getting up, and patting JULIA on the cheek.*) — Well,

well; she's a nice, quiet, good-humored, modest-looking girl. — (*JULIA courtesies to each of these epithets. — To DORA.*) — Has my nephew seen her?

Do. O, dear, no, Sir Owen — I have kept her out of Mr. Alfred's sight — I should not have brought her to the castle if you had not been here. A young girl of that age, Sir Owen, is — a young girl, look you.

Sir O. Decidedly.

Do. And they are shocking people for talking scandal in our village.

Sir O. And in what village are they not, I should like to know?

Do. Ah, I dare say, Sir Owen, they are all alike. — (*To JULIA.*) What have you done with your tongue, Taffline? — why don't you speak to his honor?

Ju. (*With the Welsh accent.*) — I don't know what to say to him, look you.

Sir O. Tell me how old you are.

Ju. (*Courtesying.*) — Just eighteen, Sir Owen.

Do. Ay, I remember it very well — she was born the morning after the great storm. — (*Aside.*) — Lord help me, I hope there mayn't be another after that. — (*Aloud.*) — Now, then, my dear, make a courtesy to Sir Owen, and come with me, for I have many things to do this morning, and must be bustling.

Sir O. Stay a moment! — (*Aside.*) — I must find out if that puppy has seen the girl. — (*Aloud.*) — Dora, do you go about your household affairs, and leave your niece with me a little, as I am all alone. She will amuse me.

Do. La! Sir Owen, I fear she will not be much of a companion, look you; she will not speak a word, hardly, you see, sir!

Sir O. O, never fear! I'll make her speak; she'll tell me all her little secrets, I'm sure. Perhaps I can serve her in some way.

Do. You are so good, Sir Owen! — (*To JULIA.*) — There, don't be shy — and talk to his honor like a good little woman, look you.

[*Exit, R. H.*]

Sir O. Now, child, come here, and let us have a little bit of quiet chat — come, come!

Ju. I daren't.

Sir O. Why not — are you afraid of me?

Ju. Yes — if you please, sir — a little, look you.

Sir O. But I don't please that you should be afraid of me — I wish to be a friend to you — so come nearer.

Ju. But I don't like to move in this place, for fear I should fall.

Sir O. For fear you should fall — why, child? Why should you fall here?

Ju. I don't know. But when I left my native village they told me that a young girl like me should be very careful, particularly if I went into great houses, and saw great people; for if I made one false step, and had a fall, I should never rise again, look you.

Sir O. (*Smiling.*) — Ay, ay, and for that very reason you will need a guide — a friend. — (*Gets up, and leads her to the front of*

the stage.) — There; so far you are safe — now sit down. — (*She sits timidly down by SIR OWEN.*) — Now, tell me — ain't you very dull here, with no company but your old aunt?

Ju. No!

Sir O. No! You surprise me; for I dare say you've left a sweetheart, now, behind you in your own little village.

Ju. O, dear, no! — O, dear, no! — pless you — I have no sweetheart; but if ever I should have one, I should love him for one reason only, look you.

Sir O. Indeed! and what may that be?

Ju. The old one that is given in the song, look you.

Sir O. (*Mimicking.*) — “In the song, look you” — well, then, sing me the song, look you.

Air — JULIA. (*Welsh.*) — “*Allurement of love.*”

It is not for his gold, sir, nor for he's young and bold, sir —
Nor for his looks — though handsome as a morn of spring is he;
I've but one rule for loving, sir, but that's the best can be —
I love my love because I know my love loves me.
For youth it will not last, sir, and beauty fadeth fast, sir,
And riches, in a moment, may at fortune's bidding flee;
But honest hearts no change can know; and so, good sir, d'ye see —
I love my love because I know my love loves me?

Sir O. (*Delighted.*) — That's the sort of singing I like now, when you don't lose the melody in a wilderness of trashy ornament — all pure, pure — that's the voice to soothe one to sleep, and make one forget one's trouble — ay, even the gout.

Ju. (*Aside.*) — Ha, ha! — Mr. Sir!

Sir O. (*Aside.*) — Upon my life, she's charming! — (*DAVID appears at the back, watching the progress.*)

Ju. (*To DAVID.*) — Caught! I declare it will do!

Sir O. What, child! What did you say? Who's caught — what's caught?

Ju. A — a — fly, look you! — (*Showing her closed hand.*)

Sir O. Well, well, let it go, and listen to me. I am interested — strangely interested — about you, and am anxious that you should do well. You may have many lovers — all silly, giddy, young men; but that won't do. That is not the proper sort of husband for you — you will need a friend, a counsellor, a middle-aged man — one who knows how to guide you and govern himself.

Ju. I should not like an old man, look you.

Sir O. An old man! — no, no, child — not an old man, certainly — but a man, for instance, about my age.

Ju. (*Astonished.*) — Your age! — (*Recovering herself.*) — O, yes, yes; but where shall I ever find such another as you, Sir Owen — Cot pless you?

Sir O. (*Delighted.*) — Dear child! dear child! — (*Aside.*) — Now, that came direct from the heart — an ebullition of nature — no trick, no deceit about that. — (*To JULIA, taking her hand.*) — You are not afraid of me now, then, Taffline?

Ju. O, no, no, no! I feel as intimate with you now as I do with my Billy.

Sir O. And who may your Billy be?

Ju. O, my pretty goat, look you — and I do not wish to go away and leave you, as I did just now.

Sir O. Bless your little single, simple heart, you shan't leave me — I won't leave you. I'll pack off my nephew, and stay here for the remainder of my life.

Ju. (*Archly.*) — Ah, ah! I know something about your nephew, look you — I could tell if I liked.

Sir O. About my nephew, child. — (*Aside.*) — I thought so. What can you possibly know about my nephew? — I thought he had never seen you — old Dora has deceived me, then — he *has* seen you, and, of course, been making love to you?

Dav. (*Aside.*) — Now for it.

Ju. No, no; it is not that, pless you.

Sir O. What is it, then, child?

Ju. It is a great secret, look you. Can you keep a secret?

Sir O. I'll keep anything you'll trust me with.

Ju. Well, then; but you must promise me you will not be angry, look you.

Sir O. Well, well, child — what is it?

Ju. (*Holding her finger at him playfully.*) — Promise, then.

Sir O. I promise — I promise.

Ju. (*Confidentially.*) — I overheard Mr. Alfred, the other night, telling aunt Dora all about his marriage with the lady he loved so much — Cot pless her.

Sir O. His marriage! Why, he has never dared —

Ju. Hush! hush! hush!

Sir O. Married, indeed! — a graceless young puppy — I'll go and kick him out of the house instantly.

Ju. My heart, my heart, sir! — is this the way you keep your promise? You are not a man of your word, look you.

Sir O. But I am in a rage, child — in a thundering passion!

Ju. Yes, yes; so I see — but you must come out of it in a flash of lightning, or I shall go in a great rage myself, and you will repent it; for then I am terrible — I am terrible.

Sir O. But I'm not angry with you, child — you are a good, dear little girl, and I'm really very fond of you. — (*Taking her hand.*) — But that nephew of mine — he'll drive me mad — to dare to disobey me, on that particular point, too; but I will make him repent it. — (*Looks at JULIA, and pauses.*) — I've a great mind — I've often threatened it — he hasn't believed me — I'll do it — I will, by Jove.

Ju. Name of goodness! — what will you do, Sir Owen?

Sir O. I'll be married myself — and to you, my pretty Taffline — you shall be my lady.

Dav. (*Aside.*) — I thought it would come to this — ha, ha, ha!

Ju. To me! You marry me? — (*Aside.*) — Well, this *is* a good joke, indeed! — (*Rises.*)

Sir O. (*Rises.*) — Yes, child — yes; we were made for each other — I'm sure of it — I feel it. Then my revenge upon Alfred will be sweet indeed, in every sense of the word. When he finds you are going to be his aunt, how astonished the fellow will be — ha, ha, ha!

Ju. He will, indeed — he'll never believe it, pless you.

Sir O. I dare say not; but he'll find it true, and to his cost.

Ju. Don't you be too sure — you will alter your mind by and by, I think, look you.

Sir O. Never, child, never! I am my own master, and have a right to do what I like with myself.

Ju. But what will people think?

Sir O. It signifies little to me what they *think*, provided they don't *say* what they think; besides, I'll give up people, the world, and stay here alone with you — you, precious drop of mountain dew!

Ju. And are you sure you shall not repent, Sir Owen? for I've heard people say —

Air — “*Poor Mary Anne.*”

Lock'd for life in Hymen's fetter,
Poor married man!
With a half he calls “his better” —
Poor married man!

All the joys his fancy nurst, sir,
Scarcely blown before they burst, sir,
He finds his *better* half his *worst*, sir —
Poor married man!

Sir O. Bless your pretty warbling throat — there's no fear of that with you.

Ju. My heart, my heart! — (*Laughing.*) — What a funny thing love is. Cot pless us! if anybody had told you yesterday you were going to be married, and to a poor little Welsh girl, you would not have believed them, look you.

Sir O. Yesterday, child! — no! nor an hour ago; but I must see about getting rid of Mr. Alfred, though. — (*DAVID disappears.*)

Ju. Pray don't you go yet — I want to ask you a little question: Has your nephew loved the lady that he has married a long time? — Cot pless her!

Sir O. O, his head has been turned about her these two years!

Ju. Ah, indeed! — I have heard him say she was very good and very clever, and two or three other pretty thing; about her, *Cot pless her.*

Sir O. What's that to me, or to you either, child? — the girl's a beggar — she hasn't a shilling in the world — but what's the matter, child? What are you thinking about?

Ju. That I am as bad as she is, then — a beggar! for *I* have not a *silling* in the world.

Sir O. That's nothing to the purpose—and *I* have come to year, of discretion, am dependent upon no one, and have a right to do as I like.

Ju. Ah, I think I understand what you mean. Your nephew, *look you*, does wrong to marry a lady of his own rank, and about his own age, and one he has loved for some time — *Cot pless her!* — but *you* do quite right when you propose to marry a poor, unknown, untaught, little Welsh girl, young enough to be your grandchild — look you.

Dav. (*Aside, who, during this, has appeared at the back.*) — She had you there, old boy.

Sir O. Humph! — (*Aside.*) — There's common sense in her observation, certainly. — (*Aloud.*) — But, child, everything, you know, depends so much upon circumstances.

Ju. Very true; and so will my marriage with you, I think.

Sir O. How do you mean?

Ju. Why — don't you know that Mr. Alfred owes some money?

Sir O. (*Aside.*) — Alfred again — what does this mean? — (*Aloud.*) — Yes, child, I *do* know it — and he is likely to owe it — for I will never pay another farthing for him.

Ju. Yes — I think you will — *Cot pless you!*

Sir O. Never, child, never; and I am sure you are too reasonable to expect it.

Ju. But I am *not* reasonable — look you — and I will not be reasonable — and I will not marry you — or have anything to say to you — if you do not pay his debts — that I will not. I will not be made a lady — and have a fine house and fine clothes — while your own nephew is turned out without a *silling* — my heart — my heart! it would be sad, indeed —

Sir O. Good girl! good girl — (*Aside.*) — She's as good as she's pretty — those feelings ought to be, and shall be, appreciated. — (*Aloud.*) — I will do as you wish, my little dear — but remember — I do it for *your* sake only.

Ju. *Cot pless you* — thank you — and — and — I think, for *my* sake, you will consent to see your little niece —

Sir O. See her — no — O, no — don't mention her, I beg, child —

Ju. But I must mention her — I *will* mention her — *Cot pless her!* I will talk of nothing else, look you, till you consent to see her.

Sir O. But, child — child — it's not possible I can do so — only think —

Ju. (*Stamping her feet.*) — I never think — I never think — I never think. — (*Sir O. is about to speak; she stops him.*) — You shall not speak — you shall never speak again — unless it is to say "Yes," when I ask you to see your niece. Will you say "Yes" to that? — (*Sir O. walks about angrily; she follows him, constantly saying, Will you say "Yes?"*) *DAVID expresses great delight, but disappears as they walk about the stage.*

Sir O. By Jove, the girl is certainly mad — well, well, be quiet,

child, and I'll think about it—we shall see—we shall see—
(*Throws himself on sofa, quite overcome.*)

— Will you say "Yes," dear Sir Owen?

Air. — “*Mountain Fairy.*”

List to me, I pray now do, sir,
List as Taffline would to you, sir;
Must she thus unheeded, sue sir?
Do as you'd be done by — do, sir!
Look you, hur will love you ever,
If to pardon you'll endeavor
Those whom it would kill to sever;
Do — sir — do !
See, her cheeks with tears are streaming! —
Was your kindness only seeming?
Was she wrong, alas! in deeming
She was ever dear to you? —
Think how Taffline's breast would smart, now,
If from you compelled to part, now!
Won't you, then, say, " Yes," dear heart, now !
Do — sir — do ! —

Sir O. (Delighted, kisses her.) — Bless you, child! bless you! — It is quite impossible to refuse you anything — if you were to ask me to dance a hornpipe, or cut my throat, it would be all the same — I should do it. I consent — I do say “Yes.”

Ju. (*Aside to ALFRED and DAVID, who appear at back.*) — Victory! victory! — (*Runs round the sofa, and throws herself on both knees before SIR OWEN.*) — Now you are a dear — good — sweet — kind — charming old man.

Alf. I beg pardon, sir; perhaps I disturb your tête-à-tête.

Sir O. Perhaps you do, sir.

Alf. In that case I'll retire —

Sir O. No, sir; since you are here, stay; I have something to communicate to you. In the first place, sir, make your bow to this young lady, and treat her with the greatest respect, sir.

Alf. Respect, sir! — you are joking.

Sir O. You'll have no cause to think it a joke, sir, for — for — I beg to inform you, sir, that I am going to make this lady my wife!

Alf. (*Bursting into a fit of laughter.*) — Your wife, sir!

Sir O. Impudent puppy!

Alf. (To SIR OWEN.)—But, my dear sir, are you really in earnest? Why, you haven't known the *young lady* an hour!

Sir O. What's that to you, sir—what's that to you? I have known her long enough to find out that her heart is in the right place, sir, and that she will do honor to the ancient name of Grif-fiths.

Alf. I am delighted to hear it, sir!

Sir O. Very well, sir; then make your bow to your future
aunt!

Alf. Certainly, sir. — (*Advancing to JULIA with mock gravity,*

and bowing.) — Madam, may I presume to hope that a hitherto worthless individual may find favor in your sight — that you will deign to take him under your special protection, and teach him which is the right and proper resting-place for *his* heart. — (*Takes JULIA'S hand, and kisses it.*)

Sir O. That will do, sir — that will do, I tell you!

Alf. Sir, I am anxious to show you a specimen of the *respect* with which I intend to treat my future aunt!

Sir O. Very well, sir; but that's quite enough for the present!

Ju. Look you, Sir Owen; don't you think I had better go to *my* aunt? — she will want me, may be.

Sir O. The impertinent assurance of that scapegrace has frightened her. Yes, child, go to your aunt now; but don't stay away long. I shall be very dull without you. — (*Takes her hand, and kisses it; leads her out at back entrance; returns humming, and seats himself on sofa.*)

Alf. (*Aside.*) — I thought he was humming the "Conquering Hero," — he looks it and feels it, I'm sure. — (*To SIR OWEN.*) — And, so, sir, you are really going to be married?

Sir O. Yes, sir, I am; and I don't think it possible to have made a better choice — such spirit, blended with such softness — such grace. Yes, sir, grace — I repeat it, and without affectation; but her crowning charm in my eyes, sir, is the good, sound common sense which she possesses.

Alf. (*Aside.*) — How the old fire's burning up! Egad! he's more serious about it than I thought for! — (*Aloud.*) — Really, sir, I see nothing in her to captivate a man of taste — a commonplace, awkward, country girl; and, spite of her appearance of innocence, I'll engage she has made use of some art by which she has wheedled herself into your good graces.

Sir O. It's no such thing, sir — she's an angel — you, a libellous puppy, and don't deserve the kind consideration she has bestowed upon you.

Alf. Upon me, sir? — what can she possibly know or care about me?

Sir O. She knows more about your affairs than you think for, sir! She has informed me of your imprudent marriage, sir!

Alf. What, sir! — she — I —

Sir O. Don't trouble yourself to frame a lie, sir. I know all, and would have turned you out of the house instantly if it had not been for the entreaties — (*Aside*) — to say nothing of the threats — (*Aloud*) — of that dear child. She would not consent to become my wife until I had promised to pay all your debts.

Alf. Bless her little heart!

Sir O. And that I should agree to give you and your wife an asylum in my house.

Alf. Is it possible? O, my dear uncle! — (*Embracing him.*) — I shall go mad with joy; you must see my Julia directly — she is not far off — at a relation's — we'll have her here instantly. Adieu for the present, my dear uncle! — (*Aside.*) — What will he say

when he knows the truth? — (*Aloud.*) — But may I hope you are no longer angry with us?

Sir O. I'm not very much pleased, at any rate.

D U O.

"*Of a noble race was Shenkin.*"

Sir Owen.

Of a noble race descended,
On your duty I depended;
I'd a right to feel offended;
But the matter now is ended,
And the least said's soonest mended.

Alf. — (*Aside.*)

But I'm inclined to think you'll find
That, upon this head, the least you've said
Is much more than you intended!

[*Exit.*

Sir O. Well, he has taken it much better than I had any right to expect he would; for my marrying will make a serious difference to him: he has always expected one day or other to come in for my fortune — now, of course, it will go to my children! — (*DORA passes through hall at back of stage.*) — Ah, there goes old Dora! I ought to tell her my intentions. I will — I'll do everything in proper order. — (*Goes to back, and calls.*) — Dora! Dora!

Do. (*Answering off.*) — Coming, Sir Owen, coming.

Enter DORA.

Sir O. Come here, Dora, and sit down by me.

Do. What! Sir Owen, me! — sit down by you! — my heart, my heart! that will never do!

Sir O. Sit down, do, when I desire you, and don't be an old fool!

Do. (*Courtesies.*) — You are very kind, Sir Owen. — (*Sits down fearfully.*) — There, I am down, Sir Owen.

Sir O. Then listen. Your niece is a charming little girl — I'm delighted with her, and I mean to marry her!

Do. (*Starts up astonished; sits down again, afraid of SIR O.*) — Did you say marry my niece? — (*Aside.*) — O, dear! — O, dear! what am I to do or say now? David Jones did not tell me of this.

Sir O. Well, dame, you consent, I suppose?

Do. Pless me! I have nothing to do with it.

Sir O. How! nothing to do with it?

Do. O! that is, I mean, if you — if Taffline likes it — it is all right, look you — it is her affair.

Sir O. Ah! exactly; I understand you — then it's all settled, and we shall be married directly.

Do. (*Aside.*) — All settled! and be married directly! — dear! dear! what does it all mean? — (*Aloud.*) — And what does Mr. Alfred say to this, Sir Owen?

Sir O. Mr. Alfred, indeed! I suppose I have a right to do as I like without consulting Mr. Alfred! — but pray don't distress yourself about him, for he approves it highly; and he and his wife are coming to live with us here in the old castle.

Do. *His* wife! — (*Aside.*) — O, dear! — O, dear! Well, Sir Owen, if you are content, and Mr. Alfred is content, and everybody is content, I am sure I am, look you. — (*Aside.*) — But it is very strange —

Sir O. I think you will have reason to be satisfied, old dame, for you shall share in the general good; and, to begin, I shall make you a little present to buy a new gown with for the wedding — there, there's five sovereigns for you.

Do. Can it be? — pless me, I never had so much money in my hand before, look you! And is it really mine — all my own — my very own?

Sir O. Certainly!

Do. I peg pardon, Sir Owen, but let me ask you one thing. If, by *chance*, you should change your mind, look you, or anything should happen to put off the marriage, must I give you back these pretty little things?

Sir O. By no means. Do you suppose that I give a thing, and take a thing, as the school-boys say?

Do. Pless you! Cot pless you, Sir Owen! — (*Puts the money in her pocket.* — *Aside.*) — I like to be sure before I spend any of it, look you.

Enter DAVID.

Dav. Sir Owen, your niece will be here in about a minute.

Sir O. Indeed! so soon arrived; she must have been very near at hand.

Dav. Much nearer than you thought for, certainly.

Do. O, I was afraid of this?

Sir O. And why should you be afraid?

Do. Ah, Cot pless you, Sir Owen! when she comes, my niece goes for certain, look you.

Sir O. Not at all — not at all! Taffline has nothing to fear from her. But tell me, David, what is she like — eh?

Dav. Why, like what I call a very pretty woman — but there's no accounting for tastes, you know. You'll be sorry for what you've done when you see her, I can tell you. Ah, I've heard all about it! A pretty ridiculous figure you'll look with a young thing like that for a wife.

Sir O. David! David!

Dav. Well, don't blame me, you know — that's all — it's your own doings — I told you not — But here comes your niece.

Enter ALFRED, conducting JULIA, dressed as herself, she afraid to advance.

Sir O. (*Aside.*) — Since I have given my word to Taffline, I

must keep it; but I more than half repent having consented to see this fine lady.

Ju. (*Aside to ALFRED.*) — Dear Alfred — my heart fails me at the last. What will Sir Owen say when he finds how I have deceived him? — (*During this, DAVID and DORA are trying to persuade SIR OWEN to go to meet JULIA.*)

Dav. Well, I do think you might as well *behave* like the gentleman you *are*, and go and meet the poor girl — she is frightened out of her wits at being in your presence.

Alf. Dear uncle — here is my wife — my darling Julia — allow me to present her to you.

Sir O. (*Bowing without looking at her.*) — Happy to see you, ma'am — let all be forgotten — and — and — make yourself as comfortable as you can.

Ju. O, sir — dear sir! — (*Aside.*) — What shall I do? — the words will not come out. — (*Aloud.*) — And you will, then, indeed, forgive me?

Sir O. How's this? — that voice seems familiar to me — where have I heard it? What does it mean? — what does it mean, I say?

Alf. Dear sir, what is the matter?

Ju. (*Assuming the accent.*) — Sir Owen is surprised, look you — that is all.

Sir O. (*Looks at her a moment, then turns furiously to ALFRED.*) — What deceit — what fool's trick is this?

Dav. Forgive 'um, and you shall know all.

Sir O. Never! never!

Alf. Dear uncle, hear me.

Sir O. I will not, sir. Out of my house, and never presume to cross my threshold again.

Ju. (*Advancing timidly to him.*) — Hear me, dear sir — I am the only culprit, and ought to be the only sufferer. Your nephew would not have incurred your displeasure but through me — let him, through me, be again restored to your affection. You approved the heart and feelings of the little Welsh girl; believe me, I have not changed them with my dress. Keep your wealth — we renounce it cheerfully — all we covet is your love, dear sir — afford us that, and you will make two of the happiest beings in the world. — (*Imitating.*) — Will you not say Yes to that, dear Sir Owen?

Sir O. (*Quite overcome, embraces her affectionately.*) — Dear child — dear child — God bless you.

Alf. Dear uncle!

Dav. Hurrah! hurrah! — you have done a right thing for once in your life.

Sir O. And so you have all been in a league against me — you, David, too?

Dav. To be sure — when you don't behave yourself properly, you know, I am always against you.

Sir O. And Dora here?

Do. Cot pless you — what could I do? I could not refuse, look you — could you?

Sir O. No, no; you are 'right, old dame — I could *not*. —
(*Takes JULIA's hand.*)

Do. (*To Ju.*) — And if at any time you should stand in need of father or mother, or uncle or aunt — look you, I shall be happy to —

Ju. Thanks, Dora, thanks — but here I have found them all. —
(*Coming forward.*) — Having found *relations there* — may I hope as usual to find friends *here*; and if among them there be any Welsh who think I have ill-used their native tongue — with their and your kind permission, I will repeat it until I am perfect in the dialect of “THE LITTLE WELSH GIRL” — Cot pless you.

Vaudeville. — Finale.

Julia.

The Vaudeville, flower of Gallia's nation,
Bears but ill the transplantation;
Yet we've dared, in imitation,
Cambria's harp to wake.
Now the frolic's ended —
Since to please intended —
Critics, let your justice be with gentle mercy blended,
Loom not Cambria's bards to slaughter,
Longshanks-like, who gave no quarter,
But with kindness treat her daughter,
For her music's sake.

CHORUS.

Now the frolic's ended, &c.

THE END.

